DOUBLE ISSUE JULY 20 / JULY 27, 2020

ONE LAST CHANCE

THE DEFINING YEAR FOR THE PLANET BY JUSTIN WORLAND

PLUS THE DALAI LAMA, GRETA THUNBERG, VANESSA NAKATE, OLIVER JEFFERS, STACEY ABRAMS, ANGELINA JOLIE & MORE

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A school of anthias fish swarm over a coral reef in Komodo, Indonesia

Photograph by Chris Leidy

ON THE COVER: *Art by Jill Pelto for TIME*

COURTESY ASSOULINE

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COVER DATA SOURCES: CO2 EMISSIONS AND SEA LEVELS FROM NOAA; RENEWABLE ENERGY FROM OURWORLDINDATA.ORG; TEMPERATURES FROM NASA; LAND ICE FROM IMBIE AND NATURE

Conversation

WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT...

AMERICA MUST CHANGE The July 6/July 13 double issue, about America's failure to live up to its ideals, was educational for a wide range of readers. "Thank you for opening my eyes to the horrors that decent human beings are enduring in these times," Jeanette Fein of Prescott, Ariz., wrote. Viet Thanh Nguyen's essay "The Model Minority Trap" hit home for Tracey Lin in San Francisco, who hailed it as "rare" commentary that "so clearly" represented "what it is like to be an Asian person during a pandemic and antiracism movement." Nguyen's piece left Judy Peace in Santa Monica, Calif., "in tears" over the realization that society's privileged can use their advantages either "for the good of our planet or for selfish ends."

'More than ever, right now we are Divided States of America.'

ASHOK KULKARNI, West Palm Beach, Fla.

Some Black women, like Sue Devine of Chicago, objected to the cover art, a painting by Charly Palmer, arguing that it promotes a potentially harmful stereotype of Black women as the face of protest. And other readers noted that other aspects of the minority experience in the U.S. remain underreported. For example, Leonard P. Campos of Roseville, Calif., called for coverage of the plight of his fellow Puerto Ricans, as victims of "America's imperialistic, militaristic, and capitalistic past."

'We cannot run away from our history. Face it head on and work to create a better history for tomorrow.'

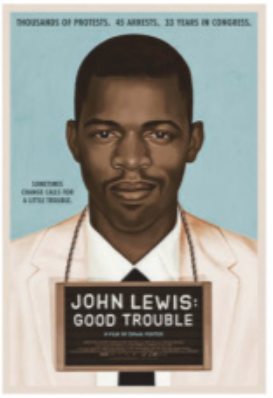
UMA LAL, Hopatcong, N.J.

For Alfonso Estrada in Glenview, Ill., the issue was a call for all Americans to look deeper at how we "developed and cultivated our inner perceptions and stereotypes about our fellow human beings."

BEHIND THE COVER For this issue's cover, Maine artist and scientist Jill Pelto, 27, used watercolor and colored pencil to create a landscape out of global climate data from the 1880s to the present. The work's title, *Currents,* is a reference to the way the earth's ocean currents are "literally shifting as our climate changes." Read more on how Pelto makes art based on science at **time.com/climate-cover**

TIME FOR KIDS The pandemic has scrambled summer plans, but TIME for Kids can help. With Camp TFK, parents get a daily roundup of online activities for kids, created and curated by TFK editors. See the lineup so far, and sign up at **time.com/camptfk**

NOW STREAMING



John Lewis: Good Trouble, a new documentary executive-produced by TIME Studios about the Congressman and civil rights leader, is now available for streaming—and a portion of every rental purchased at **ti.me/2Zva3IE** will go to support the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. Read more about the movie on page 100.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

In "Trench Lawfare" (July 6/July 13), we misstated the relationship between the President and a woman suing him; she is a former contestant on *The Apprentice.* In the same issue, in "The Model Minority Trap," we misspelled the last name of Jason Andersen, the police officer who killed Fong Lee. And a photo in Milestones appeared with an incorrect caption; it showed Jean Kennedy Smith in 1965.

PROGRAMMING NOTE

This is a special double issue that will be on sale for two weeks. The next issue of TIME will be published on July 23 and available on newsstands on July 24.

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Letters should include the writer's full name, address and home telephone, and may be edited for purposes of clarity and space

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COURTESY JILL PELTO

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Indication & Important Safety Information for OPDIVO® (nivolumab) + YERVOY® (ipilimumab)

What is OPDIVO + YERVOY?

OPDIVO® is a prescription medicine used in combination with YERVOY® (ipilimumab) as a first treatment for adults with a type of advanced stage lung cancer (called non-small cell lung cancer) when your lung cancer has spread to other parts of your body (metastatic) **and** your tumors are positive for PD-L1, but do not have an abnormal EGFR or ALK gene.

It is not known if OPDIVO is safe and effective in children younger than 18 years of age.

Important Safety Information for OPDIVO + YERVOY

OPDIVO is a medicine that may treat certain cancers by working with your immune system. OPDIVO can cause your immune system to attack normal organs and tissues in any area of your body and can affect the way they work. These problems can sometimes become serious or life-threatening and can lead to death. These problems may happen anytime during treatment or even after your treatment has ended. Some of these problems may happen more often when OPDIVO is used in combination with YERVOY.

YERVOY can cause serious side effects in many parts of your body which can lead to death. These problems may happen anytime during treatment with YERVOY or after you have completed treatment.

Serious side effects may include:

- **Lung problems (pneumonitis).** Symptoms of pneumonitis may include: new or worsening cough; chest pain; and shortness of breath.
- **Intestinal problems (colitis) that can lead to tears or holes in your intestine.** Signs and symptoms of colitis may include: diarrhea (loose stools) or more bowel movements than usual; blood in your stools or dark, tarry, sticky stools; and severe stomach area (abdomen) pain or tenderness.
- **Liver problems (hepatitis).** Signs and symptoms of hepatitis may include: yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes; severe nausea or vomiting; pain on the right side of your stomach area (abdomen); drowsiness; dark urine (tea colored); bleeding or bruising more easily than normal; feeling less hungry than usual; and decreased energy.
- **Hormone gland problems (especially the thyroid, pituitary, adrenal glands, and pancreas).** Signs and symptoms that your hormone glands are not working properly may include: headaches that will not go away or unusual headaches; extreme tiredness; weight gain or weight loss; dizziness or fainting; changes in mood or behavior, such as decreased sex drive, irritability, or forgetfulness; hair loss; feeling cold; constipation; voice gets deeper; and excessive thirst or lots of urine.
- **Kidney problems, including nephritis and kidney failure.** Signs of kidney problems may include: decrease in the amount of urine; blood in your urine; swelling in your ankles; and loss of appetite.
- **Skin problems.** Signs of these problems may include: rash; itching; skin blistering; and ulcers in the mouth or other mucous membranes.
- **Inflammation of the brain (encephalitis).** Signs and symptoms of encephalitis may include: headache; fever; tiredness or weakness; confusion; memory problems; sleepiness; seeing or hearing things that are not really there (hallucinations); seizures; and stiff neck.
- **Problems in other organs.** Signs of these problems may include: changes in eyesight; severe or persistent muscle or joint pains; severe muscle weakness; and chest pain.

Additional serious side effects observed during a separate study of YERVOY alone include:

- **Nerve problems that can lead to paralysis.** Symptoms of nerve problems may include: unusual weakness of legs, arms, or face; and numbness or tingling in hands or feet.
- **Eye problems.** Symptoms may include: blurry vision, double vision, or other vision problems; and eye pain or redness.

Get medical help immediately if you develop any of these symptoms or they get worse. It may keep these problems from becoming more serious. Your healthcare team will check you for side effects during treatment and may treat you with corticosteroid or hormone replacement medicines. If you have a serious side effect, your healthcare team may also need to delay or completely stop your treatment.

OPDIVO and OPDIVO + YERVOY can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Severe infusion-related reactions.** Tell your doctor or nurse right away if you get these symptoms during an infusion: chills or shaking; itching or rash; flushing; difficulty breathing; dizziness; fever; and feeling like passing out.

Pregnancy and Nursing:

- Tell your healthcare provider if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. OPDIVO and YERVOY can harm your unborn baby. If you are a female who is able to become pregnant, your healthcare provider should do a pregnancy test before you start receiving OPDIVO. Females who are able to become pregnant should use an effective method of birth control during and for at least 5 months after the last dose. Talk to your healthcare provider about birth control methods that you can use during this time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you become pregnant or think you are pregnant during treatment. You or your healthcare provider should contact Bristol Myers Squibb at 1-800-721-5072 as soon as you become aware of the pregnancy.
- Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study: Females who become pregnant during treatment with YERVOY are encouraged to enroll in a Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study. The purpose of this study is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. You or your healthcare provider can enroll in the Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study by calling 1-844-593-7869.
- Before receiving treatment, tell your healthcare provider if you are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if either treatment passes into your breast milk. Do not breastfeed during treatment and for 5 months after the last dose.

Tell your healthcare provider about:

- Your health problems or concerns if you: have immune system problems such as autoimmune disease, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, lupus, or sarcoidosis; have had an organ transplant; have lung or breathing problems; have liver problems; or have any other medical conditions.
- All the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

The most common side effects of OPDIVO, when used in combination with YERVOY, include: feeling tired; diarrhea; rash; itching; nausea; pain in muscles, bones, and joints, fever; cough; decreased appetite; vomiting; stomach-area (abdominal) pain; shortness of breath; upper respiratory tract infection; headache; low thyroid hormone levels (hypothyroidism); decreased weight; and dizziness.

These are not all the possible side effects. For more information, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Important Facts for OPDIVO and YERVOY, including Boxed WARNING for YERVOY regarding immune-mediated side effects, on the following page.

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IMPORTANT FACTS

The information below does not take the place of talking with your healthcare professional. Only your healthcare professional knows the specifics of your condition and how OPDIVO® (nivolumab) in combination with YERVOY® (ipilimumab) may fit into your overall therapy. Talk to your healthcare professional if you have any questions about OPDIVO (pronounced op-DEE-voh) and YERVOY (pronounced yur-voi).

℞ ONLY

What is the most important information I should know about OPDIVO (nivolumab) and YERVOY (ipilimumab)?

OPDIVO and YERVOY are medicines that may treat certain cancers by working with your immune system. OPDIVO and YERVOY can cause your immune system to attack normal organs and tissues in any area of your body and can affect the way they work. These problems can sometimes become serious or life-threatening and can lead to death and may happen anytime during treatment or even after your treatment has ended. Some of these problems may happen more often when OPDIVO is used in combination with YERVOY.

YERVOY can cause serious side effects in many parts of your body which can lead to death. These problems may happen anytime during treatment with YERVOY or after you have completed treatment.

Call or see your healthcare provider right away if you develop any symptoms of the following problems or these symptoms get worse. Do not try to treat symptoms yourself.

Lung problems (pneumonitis). Symptoms of pneumonitis may include:

- new or worsening cough
- chest pain
- shortness of breath

Intestinal problems (colitis) that can lead to tears or holes in your intestine. Signs and symptoms of colitis may include:

- diarrhea (loose stools) or more bowel movements than usual
- mucus or blood in your stools or dark, tarry, sticky stools
- stomach-area (abdomen) pain or tenderness
- you may or may not have fever

Liver problems (hepatitis) that can lead to liver failure. Signs and symptoms of hepatitis may include:

- yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes
- nausea or vomiting
- pain on the right side of your stomach area (abdomen)
- drowsiness
- dark urine (tea colored)
- bleeding or bruising more easily than normal
- feeling less hungry than usual
- decreased energy

Hormone gland problems (especially the thyroid, pituitary, and adrenal glands; and pancreas). Signs and symptoms that your hormone glands are not working properly may include:

- headaches that will not go away or unusual headaches
- extreme tiredness or unusual sluggishness
- weight gain or weight loss
- dizziness or fainting
- changes in mood or behavior, such as decreased sex drive, irritability, or forgetfulness
- hair loss
- feeling cold
- constipation
- voice gets deeper
- excessive thirst or lots of urine

Kidney problems, including nephritis and kidney failure. Signs of kidney problems may include:

- decrease in the amount of urine
- blood in your urine
- swelling in your ankles
- loss of appetite

Skin Problems. Signs of these problems may include:

- skin rash with or without itching
- itching
- skin blistering or peeling
- sores or ulcers in mouth or other mucous membranes

Inflammation of the brain (encephalitis). Signs and symptoms of encephalitis may include:

- headache
- fever
- tiredness or weakness
- confusion
- memory problems
- sleepiness
- seeing or hearing things that are not really there (hallucinations)
- seizures
- stiff neck

Problems in other organs. Signs of these problems may include:

- changes in eyesight
- severe or persistent muscle or joint pains
- severe muscle weakness
- chest pain

Additional serious side effects observed during a separate study of YERVOY (ipilimumab) alone include:

Nerve problems that can lead to paralysis. Symptoms of nerve problems may include:

- unusual weakness of legs, arms, or face
- numbness or tingling in hands or feet

Eye problems. Symptoms may include:

- blurry vision, double vision, or other vision problems
- eye pain or redness

Get medical help immediately if you develop any of these symptoms or they get worse. It may keep these problems from becoming more serious. Your healthcare team will check you for side effects during treatment and may treat you with corticosteroid or hormone replacement medicines. If you have a serious side effect, your healthcare team may also need to delay or completely stop your treatment with OPDIVO (nivolumab) and YERVOY.

What are OPDIVO and YERVOY?

OPDIVO and YERVOY are prescription medicines used to treat adults with a type of advanced stage lung cancer called non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC). OPDIVO may be used in combination with YERVOY as your first treatment for NSCLC:

- when your lung cancer has spread to other parts of your body (metastatic), and
- your tumors are positive for PD-L1, but do not have an abnormal EGFR or ALK gene.

It is not known if OPDIVO and YERVOY are safe and effective when used in children younger than 18 years of age.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before receiving OPDIVO and YERVOY?

Before you receive OPDIVO and YERVOY, tell your healthcare provider if you:

- have immune system problems (autoimmune disease) such as Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, lupus, or sarcoidosis
- have had an organ transplant
- have lung or breathing problems
- have liver problems
- have any other medical conditions
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. OPDIVO and YERVOY can harm your unborn baby. **Females who are able to become pregnant:**

  Your healthcare provider should do a pregnancy test before you start receiving OPDIVO and YERVOY.
  - You should use an effective method of birth control during and for at least 5 months after the last dose. Talk to your healthcare provider about birth control methods that you can use during this time.
  - Tell your healthcare provider right away if you become pregnant or think you are pregnant during treatment. You or your healthcare provider should contact Bristol Myers Squibb at 1-800-721-5072 as soon as you become aware of the pregnancy.
  - **Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study:** Females who become pregnant during treatment with YERVOY (ipilimumab) are encouraged to enroll in a Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study. The purpose of this study is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. You or your healthcare provider can enroll in the Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study by calling 1-844-593-7869.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if OPDIVO (nivolumab) or YERVOY passes into your breast milk. **Do not** breastfeed during treatment and for 5 months after the last dose.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your healthcare providers and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

What are the possible side effects of OPDIVO and YERVOY?

OPDIVO and YERVOY can cause serious side effects, including:

- **See "What is the most important information I should know about OPDIVO and YERVOY?"**
- **Severe infusion reactions**. Tell your doctor or nurse right away if you get these symptoms during an infusion of OPDIVO or YERVOY:
  - chills or shaking
  - itching or rash
  - flushing
  - difficulty breathing
  - dizziness
  - fever
  - feeling like passing out

The most common side effects of OPDIVO when used in combination with YERVOY include:

- feeling tired
- diarrhea
- rash
- itching
- nausea
- pain in muscles, bones, and joints
- fever
- cough
- decreased appetite
- vomiting
- stomach-area (abdominal) pain
- shortness of breath
- upper respiratory tract infection
- headache
- low thyroid hormone levels (hypothyroidism)
- decreased weight
- dizziness

These are not all the possible side effects of OPDIVO and YERVOY. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

This is a brief summary of the most important information about OPDIVO and YERVOY. For more information, talk with your healthcare provider, call 1-855-673-4861, or go to www.OPDIVO.com.

Manufactured by:
Bristol-Myers Squibb Company
Princeton, New Jersey 08543 USA

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May 2020
7356US2001322-01-01 05/20

For the Record

‘I am disgusted to my core.’

VANESSA WILSON, interim Aurora, Colo., police chief, after firing three officers on July 3 over photos that made light of the death of Elijah McClain, who died last year after being arrested and put in a choke hold

730

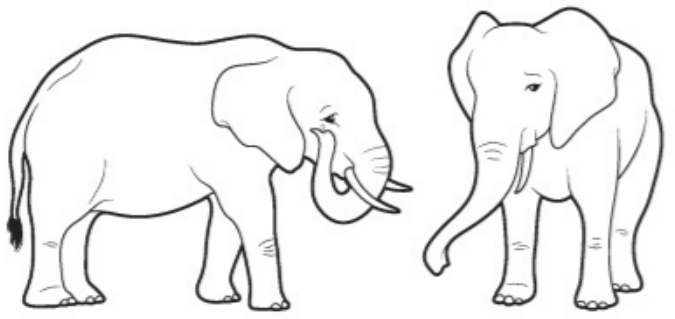
Distance from Earth, in light-years, to the first exposed planetary core—a dense object without a gaseous atmosphere—ever observed by scientists, according to a paper published July 1

75

Number of hot dogs consumed by Joey Chestnut at this year’s Nathan’s Famous Hot Dog Eating Contest on July 4—his 13th win and a new record

‘In light of recent events around our country and feedback from our community, the Washington Redskins are announcing the team will undergo a thorough review of the team’s name.’

THE WASHINGTON REDSKINS, in a July 3 statement on the future of the football team’s name; MLB’s Cleveland Indians said the same day they too were discussing “the best path forward with regard to our team name”



275

Number of elephants found dead from unknown causes in Botswana in recent weeks; one conservationist called it “one of the biggest disasters to impact elephants this century”

‘Our nation is witnessing a merciless campaign to wipe out our history, defame our heroes, erase our values and indoctrinate our children.’

DONALD TRUMP, U.S. President, in a July 3 speech at Mount Rushmore, in which he railed against “new far-left fascism”

GOOD NEWS
of the week

Janis Shinwari, a former Afghan interpreter who is credited with saving the lives of five U.S. soldiers, celebrated his first Independence Day as a U.S. citizen after taking the naturalization oath June 29

‘ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.’

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS, Atlanta mayor, after 8-year-old Secoriea Turner was shot and killed by an unknown assailant on July 4, over the course of a weekend in which the city reported 31 shooting victims

‘I want to express my deepest regrets for the wounds of the past.’

KING PHILIPPE OF BELGIUM, in a June 30 letter to the leadership of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the royal family’s first public acknowledgment of atrocities committed against the people of the former Belgian colony

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BROWN BIRD DESIGN FOR TIME

SOURCES: THE NEW YORK TIMES; AP; CNN; NPR; ESPN

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The Brief

GROUND DOWN A man is held by riot police in Hong Kong as they clear a July 1 protest against a new national-security law

INSIDE

THE FIGHT OVER THE FUTURE OF TURKEY'S HAGIA SOPHIA

REMEMBERING THE MOVIE MUSIC OF ENNIO MORRICONE

THE U.S. STRUGGLES TO TAKE STOCK OF POLICE USE OF FORCE

PHOTOGRAPH BY DALE DE LA REY

The Brief is reported by Abigail Abrams, Engin Bas, Leslie Dickstein, Alejandro de la Garza, Mélissa Godin, Suyin Haynes, Anna Purna Kambhampaty, Billy Perrigo, Madeline Roache and Olivia B. Waxman

WORLD

Security law brings a chill to Hong Kong

By Amy Gunia/Hong Kong

FOR MONTHS, THE MOSAICS OF STICKY NOTES, posters and artwork that dotted Hong Kong told a story of resistance. Pro-democracy protesters and supporters affixed messages of hope, solidarity and demands for greater political freedom to so-called Lennon Walls as protests rocked the city in 2019. But after June 30, when Beijing passed Hong Kong's national-security law, the walls came down.

Books written by pro-democracy leaders like Joshua Wong disappeared from public libraries. Activists deleted social-media accounts. Demosisto, Wong's political party, disbanded. Nathan Law, a prominent activist and another key member of Demosisto, fled the city, saying his effort to draw international attention to the movement would likely be considered a crime under the new law. "It has already brought a chilling effect … and the politics of fear to Hong Kong," he tells TIME.

The legislation's full text—which targets secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign forces—was not made public until after it became law. It was passed by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in Beijing, outside the normal legislative process that semiautonomous Hong Kong was granted under the "one country, two systems" arrangement created when the U.K. retroceded the city to China in 1997. It gives authorities sweeping powers to crack down on dissent. Some cases can now be tried in mainland courts, and mainland security agents will operate openly for the first time. Since its passage, local authorities have expanded the reach of the law even further, adding warrantless searches and the power to ask Internet providers to remove posts that violate the security law.

The Hong Kong government, and officials in Beijing, have argued that the law is necessary to restore order after violent protests over an extradition bill last year caused millions of dollars worth of damage and plunged the city into its first recession in a decade. Chief Executive Carrie Lam, who admitted she wasn't privy to the full text of the law until it was passed, has said the law will be used only against "an extremely small minority of people." She added, "Surely this is not doom and gloom for Hong Kong."

BUT EVEN as the legislation's impact is felt on the ground, the full extent of its consequences remains to be seen. Some experts say it's a devastating blow to the rule of law and unique freedoms that differentiate Hong Kong from mainland China and made it a global hub for business and banking. Jeffrey Wasserstrom, a University of California, Irvine, history professor specializing in China, says the law "amounts to a de facto form of martial law limiting speech and action." Other experts are adopting a wait-and-see approach, and many businesses say they simply want to get back to work.

And where does the democracy movement go from here? Even before the security law, the coronavirus pandemic and mass arrests sapped protests of their 2019 energy, when millions of people took to the streets.

Protesters say that the law will make attending street gatherings even riskier but that they will find other ways to continue to fight for democracy. Rick, a 16-year-old student who asked to use a pseudonym for his safety, says he disbanded a group supporting the protest movement that he ran at his school. He says he'll hold meetings in secret instead. "What has changed is the strategy I will use to express my views," he says.

Law, speaking from an undisclosed location, says he will continue to fight for democracy from abroad. However, the security legislation also says anyone who violates it anywhere in the world could be prosecuted.

Pro-democracy lawmakers are hoping public disapproval of the law will translate into victory in Sept. 6 elections for the city's Legislative Council. But some experts say the law could be used against candidates who do not demonstrate loyalty to Beijing, since anyone convicted under the new legislation will be barred from office. Wu Chi-wai, chair of the Democratic Party, says results "may not be accepted by the central government," and he does not know "whether our nomination will be disqualified, whether we will be disqualified during the election campaign, [or]whether we will be disqualified even if we get elected."

The effects will also be felt outside Hong Kong, says Wasserstrom, and could deter professionals from moving there. Governments across the world have begun to implement punitive measures. Canada suspended its extradition treaty with the territory. The U.K. has offered millions of Hong Kongers a path to citizenship, and several other nations are considering changes to help them relocate. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the Trump Administration will largely eliminate policy exemptions that underpin Hong Kong's special trade status with the U.S. Global tech companies including Google and Facebook have announced they'll temporarily halt processing requests for user data from Hong Kong police, pending review of the law.

For now, authorities are already using the new legislation on protesters. Ten people were arrested for offenses under the law on July 1, including several holding pro-independence flags and leaflets (most were granted bail). But quashing the ideals that Hong Kongers hold in private won't be so easy. Says Rick, the student: "My will to fight against the government did not change." ◻

'Surely this is not doom and gloom for Hong Kong.'

CARRIE LAM, Hong Kong chief executive, defending the city's national-security law on July 7

LAM: WU XIAOCHU—XINHUA/GETTY IMAGES; FUNERAL: ZAW MOE HTET—AFP/GETTY IMAGES

DANGEROUS TRADE At a mass grave in northern Myanmar on July 3, volunteers bury the bodies of people killed in one of the country's worst ever mining accidents. The previous day, monsoon rains had caused a landslide at a jade mine that killed at least 170 people, many of them informal migrant workers from elsewhere in the country. Myanmar supplies 90% of the world's jade, but the trade is a dangerous one. Days after the disaster, rescuers were still pulling bodies from the mud.

POSTCARD

In Turkey, remaking a museum as a mosque

SERAFFETTIN WAS AT HOME UNDER CORONAvirus lockdown on May 29 when Quranic verses were recited beneath the normally silent minarets of Istanbul's Hagia Sophia. The reading, to mark the 567th anniversary of the Ottoman conquest of the city, lingered in his mind weeks after he returned to the courtyard outside Turkey's most visited attraction.

"Hagia Sophia officially belongs to Turkey," Seraffettin said, outside the UNESCO world heritage site where he has sold *simit* bread for 15 years. "But we have to understand that people come to visit it from many different countries. We have to let them see and feel their history too." Like other vendors, he declined to give his full name so he could speak freely.

A seat of power for Orthodox Christians for almost 1000 years, the Hagia Sophia became a mosque in 1453 after the Ottomans breached Constantinople's walls. In 1934, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, who envisioned modern Turkey as a secular nation, ordered it turned into a museum. But in July, a court is set to rule on whether the Ataturk-era decree can be annulled, paving the way for the Hagia Sophia to again be a mosque.

Orthodox Christians in Greece and Russia were aghast, while U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo urged Turkey to keep the Hagia Sophia a museum to show it respected pluralism. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan responded that such reactions were "tantamount to a direct attack on our sovereignty."

Domestically, the status of the Hagia Sophia strikes at the heart of the battle between Turkey's past and a future embodied by Erdogan's brand of religious nationalism. What the President proposes to do is a reversal of Ataturk's commitment to secularism, says Soner Cagaptay, author of *Erdogan's Empire,* "flooding Turkey's public space with his own understanding of religion."

Polls suggest slightly more Turkish people support the Hagia Sophia becoming a mosque than oppose it, but a majority think the debate is primarily a distraction. "It's a bluff, like poker," says Mehmet, 60, who owns a shop near Seraffettin's *simit* trolley. There's no need to convert the building, he says. "Did we fill all the other mosques in Turkey?"

Others worried that changing the Hagia Sophia's status might dissuade foreigners from visiting, hurting an industry already reeling from the pandemic. "Look around," says Sami Bozbey, a trilingual guide scanning the courtyard for tourists, "everybody's struggling." —JOSEPH HINCKS/ISTANBUL

NEWS TICKER

Trump plans 'American Heroes' park

With monuments a flash point in the conversation about inequality in the U.S., President Trump called for the construction of a **"National Garden of American Heroes."** His July 3 Executive Order mandates that the park include statues of historical and modern figures, from Frederick Douglass to Antonin Scalia.

Bolsonaro tests positive for COVID-19

Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro, 65, confirmed on July 7 that he has COVID-19. He took the test, his fourth, on July 6 after developing symptoms. The **populist leader has downplayed the risks of the coronavirus,** calling it "a little flu"; his country is the second worst-affected in the world.

ICE releases new foreign-student rules

Foreign students will be **barred from staying in the U.S.** to take classes at colleges that have switched to a fully online learning model, according to rules announced July 6 by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology sued over the new policy on July 8.

NATION

As COVID-19 soars, Miami resists reclosing

By Vera Bergengruen

IT HAD BEEN BARELY SIX WEEKS SINCE MICHAEL Beltran and his staff reopened his Miami restaurants when he had to sit them down again and tell them the bad news. Despite all their efforts, working feverish, 20-hour days to reconfigure the spaces for new guidelines amid the rush to reopen, Beltran was now being forced to close again. "I had to look them in the eye and say, 'You did everything right, but you're not going to have a job on Wednesday,'" says the chef and restaurant owner. "It's soul-crushing."

Florida, which now has one of the fastest-growing COVID-19 caseloads in the nation, is struggling to balance its fresh spike with the cost of reclosing. In the early months of the crisis, things had looked good. Despite predictions that spring-break crowds, a large elderly population and a delayed lockdown would make it a major hot spot, Florida was spared the worst of the pandemic that has killed more than 131,000 Americans. As the state came out of lockdown in early May, President Donald Trump repeatedly praised its governor, Ron DeSantis, saying he was doing a "spectacular job."

A couple drinks at a restaurant in Miami Beach on June 26

A month later, the number of confirmed cases spiked dramatically. The number of coronavirus patients filling Miami-Dade County's hospitals has doubled in the past two weeks to more than 1,600. On July 4, Floridians accounted for more than a fifth of all new COVID-19 cases in the country. In a rush to curb the spread, officials temporarily closed beaches, reimposed curfews and issued a county-wide mandatory mask order in Miami-Dade, but it wasn't enough. On July 6, Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez abruptly announced that restaurants, gyms and event venues would have to shut back down again, a drastic attempt to break through the false sense of security that many Floridians have lived with for months. Hours later, he backtracked to allow some outdoor dining. "Simply relying on public compliance was clearly not working," says Miami Commissioner Ken Russell.

But it's hard to impress the severity of the danger on those who have been living as if the worst has passed. Local officials are still struggling to reel in residents and tourists crowding waterfront parks and busy restaurants, pleading with them to take the surge of infections seriously. On a recent, near 100° day, police officers on South Beach alternated between issuing warnings and handing out masks, which many people promptly peeled off. Boats clogged the waterways over the July 4 holiday weekend, some packed with dozens of partyers. In the Coconut Grove neighborhood, lines of people, many unmasked, snaked by outdoor cafés, greeting one another Miami-style: with a cheek kiss.

FLORIDA ISN'T THE ONLY STATE in this predicament. At least 20 other states have had to pause or roll back their reopening plans as hospitalizations rise. "How do you do a lockdown backwards?" asks Dr. Aileen Marty, an infectious-disease expert at Florida International University. Marty and some local officials partly blame state officials' mixed messaging for Floridians' brushing off the new emergency orders. "We've got leaders that refuse to acknowledge how serious this is," she says.

More than perhaps any other governor, DeSantis has tied his political future to Trump's when it comes to the handling of the pandemic. He has resisted pressure to issue a statewide mandatory mask order, and echoed the President's line that the economic damage of a prolonged lockdown could do more harm than the virus. He has angrily pushed back on allegations from a former state employee that Florida manipulated data to drum up support for reopening. At an Oval Office sit-down with Trump in late April that some in the state warned was a premature victory tour, he boasted that despite the "draconian orders" issued in other states, "Florida has done better."

That declaration hasn't aged well. In Miami, the lines of cars outside drive-through testing centers are growing. Hospitals warn that they will be inundated if cases continue to rise: some 56 ICUs across the state were projected to reach capacity on July 8. And with no end in sight, many newly shuttered businesses say they won't be able to weather an ongoing seesaw between case spikes and hasty reopenings. "Why even start this process?" Beltran, the chef, wonders aloud. "I hope those people that didn't abide by rules are happy with themselves." ◻

MIAMI: CHANDAN KHANNA—AFP/GETTY IMAGES; MORRICONE: FERDINANDO SCIANNA—MAGNUM PHOTOS; CORDERO: DANIEL ZUCHNIK—WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES

DIED
Country singer and bandleader **Charlie Daniels,** on July 6, at 83.

REOPENED
The Louvre Museum in Paris, home of the *Mona Lisa,* after a nearly four-month closure, on July 6.

EXTENDED
The deadline for **Paycheck Protection Program** loan applications, after President Trump signed a new law on July 4; $130 billion in funds remains to be distributed.

APOLOGIZED
A **Kansas newspaper owner and local GOP official,** on July 5, for posting a cartoon that appeared to equate a statewide order to wear masks with the Holocaust.

ARRESTED
Jeffrey Epstein associate **Ghislaine Maxwell,** by the FBI, charged with facilitating and participating in his sexual abuse of minors, on July 2.

OBSERVED
Record-high average temperatures in the **Siberian Arctic** for the month of June, per E.U. data.

RESIGNED
David Clark, New Zealand's Health Minister, on July 2. He admitted to breaking coronavirus lockdown rules imposed in late March and drew public anger for appearing to blame quarantine lapses on a popular official.

BOUGHT
Postmates, by Uber, for $2.65 billion, subject to regulatory approval, per a July 6 announcement.

Morricone, pictured in 2003, four years before he received an Academy Award for lifetime achievement

DIED

Ennio Morricone

Cinematic soundscaper

By Danny Elfman

THE 20TH CENTURY WAS THE ERA OF FILM MUSIC, AND THE world just lost one of that century's true giants. Ask a dozen film composers to name their heroes and you'll get many different answers, but I would confidently bet that one name would be on every single list. The name of a true, undeniable musical genius: Ennio Morricone.

But Morricone, who died at 91 on July 6, was more than a musical hero. He was an icon. What really set him apart were his absolutely unique sensibilities. His imprint on cinema music's culture was so strong that entire genres were defined by him. His 1960s compositions for Sergio Leone's westerns, like *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly,* entered the popular culture so deeply that almost everyone knows their sound, even without being aware of it. And countering that highly idiosyncratic music were scores so lushly romantic, like that of *Once Upon a Time in America,* they redefined what truly emotional and purely evocative film music could aim for. His was the high mark.

His work goes beyond the movies he composed for and will be deeply embedded in the art of film music for as long as there is film. He will be missed, but his music will not be forgotten.

***Elfman** is an Oscar-nominated film composer*

DIED

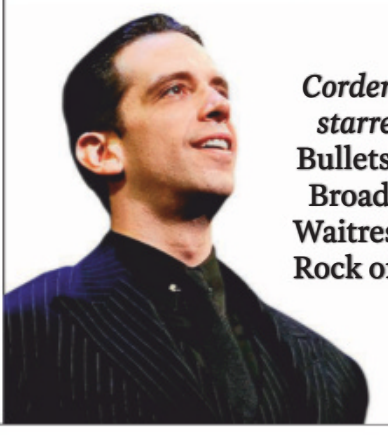
Nick Cordero

Broadway star

BEFORE COVID-19, ACTOR Nick Cordero was in the prime of his life. His wife, Amanda Kloots, had recently given birth to their first child, and the young family had moved west after Cordero accepted a role in a play in Los Angeles.

Then came the pandemic. Cordero, who according to Kloots had no pre-existing health conditions, contracted the disease in March. He spent the rest of his life in the hospital, facing secondary lung infections, ministrokes and an amputation—and, as Kloots shared his daily progress on social media, became one recognizable face of a global crisis. On July 5, 95 days after he fell ill, Cordero died. He was 41.

Friends remembered Cordero, who was nominated for a Tony Award in 2014 for his portrayal of a tap-dancing gangster in *Bullets Over Broadway,* as a vivacious performer, and his family recalled a devoted father and husband. "He was everyone's friend, loved to listen, help and especially talk," said Kloots. As states press forward with reopening, close friend Zach Braff had a message for the public. "Don't believe," the actor wrote on Twitter, "that COVID only claims the elderly and infirm." —BILLY PERRIGO



***Cordero, 41, starred in* Bullets Over Broadway, Waitress *and* Rock of Ages**

Why we still don't know how often police kill people in America

By Vera Bergengruen

Police advance on protesters in Minneapolis on May 30

JASON ARMOND—LOS ANGELES TIMES/GETTY IMAGES

ONE: GET POLICE DEPARTMENTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO report when their officers use lethal force or seriously injure someone. Two: Collect that information in a national database. Three: Release those statistics to the public.

That simple formula has been at the heart of nearly every comprehensive police-reform proposal in modern U.S. history. And for good reason: police chiefs and community organizers, Republicans and Democrats, federal lawmakers and local leaders all agree that a comprehensive database of use-of-force incidents is key to fighting racial injustice in law enforcement. But that bipartisan agreement, as well as a 26-year-old federal law mandating the creation of a database and a five-year effort by the FBI to build one, have all failed to produce reliable data on how and when America's police officers use force against its own people.

"I've been around so long, and it seems they just keep rediscovering the wheel," says Geoffrey Alpert, a criminology professor at the University of South Carolina. When he testified at the Justice Department on June 19, he covered "the same thing I've talked about for 30 years" in similar meetings during the Bush, Clinton and Obama administrations, he says. "It's always been obvious: If we don't know the data, how do we identify the problem? The only way forward is with evidence, but we continue to spin in circles."

As of May, only 40% of police departments across the country had submitted information to the FBI's National Use-of-Force Data Collection, the most recent effort to collect this data, an agency spokeswoman told TIME. The database, which began collecting the information in January 2019, has run into the same basic issue that has stalled previous attempts: it relies on voluntary participation, which results in an incomplete and skewed picture of how police officers are using force across the country. To fix the problem, participation "should be mandatory for every law-enforcement agency," Steven Casstevens, head of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, testified to the Senate Judiciary Committee on June 16. But truly mandatory reporting would require an act of Congress, and legal experts tell TIME it's not clear federal lawmakers have the power to require state and local departments to comply.

The nationwide protests that followed George Floyd's killing by a police officer who had a record of conduct complaints have revived efforts to collect this data. A June 16 Executive Order from President Trump and competing police-reform bills put forward by House Democrats and Senate Republicans all seek to create a more complete database by tying federal grant funding to regular reporting. But police chiefs, former FBI and DOJ statisticians, and law-enforcement analysts say that unless lawmakers acknowledge and address the roadblocks that stalled previous efforts, the current momentum is likely to end in the same disappointment.

OF COURSE, addressing those roadblocks is easier said than done. Offering grants to cooperative agencies—the tactic favored by Trump and legislators—might work to some extent. "Almost everyone is getting federal funding of some type, and they certainly don't want to risk that, so it can be an effective tool," says Matthew Hickman, chair of the criminal justice department at Seattle University and a former statistician at the Bureau of Justice Statistics. But that is still less effective than making collection and reporting mandatory.

Trump's Executive Order is almost identical to a law that already exists, a provision in the 1994 crime bill signed by President Bill Clinton. Both direct the U.S. Attorney General to gather use-of-force data and periodically make it

public, though neither actually requires police departments to provide that data. Following the 1994 law, the Justice Department's strategy was to expand its Police Public Contact Survey, which asks U.S. residents about their encounters with police. The latest report available, from 2015, polled 70,959 residents but still contained no comprehensive data on use-of-force incidents.

The dearth of information has led to open frustration by the nation's top law-enforcement officials. "It's ridiculous that I can't tell you how many people were shot by the police in this country last week, last year, the last decade—it's ridiculous," then FBI Director James Comey admitted in February 2015.

In the spring of that year, the Obama Administration launched a separate FBI initiative. The program convened its first task force in 2016 and ran a pilot program in 2017. It established a help-desk hotline and an email address for police officers submitting data, and developed a web application meant to simplify uploading cases in bulk. The FBI's National Use-of-Force Data Collection, rolled out to great fanfare in November 2018, established what the FBI hailed as the first "mechanism for collecting nationwide statistics related to use-of-force incidents."

But despite all that, as of this spring, fewer than half of U.S. police departments were enrolled in the FBI's program and sharing data. According to an FBI pilot study reviewed by TIME, the first public report of the database's statistics was "scheduled for March 2019." It never materialized. An FBI spokesperson tells TIME the first publication is now expected to be "this summer."

An FBI overview of the program listed a few reasons police departments would be reluctant to participate in the database, including the time burden on officers—roughly 38 minutes per incident. "They made it a federal law, but Congress did not appropriate any funds to actually do the job," says Seattle University's Hickman. "It's not like you flip a switch, and data flows in from 18,000 agencies—it's challenging."

ALL OF THESE PROBLEMS contribute to widespread agreement that no matter what happens in Washington, for now the most effective legislation is likely to happen at the state level. Some states, including California, Colorado, Connecticut and Texas, already gather and report statewide policing data, which they can then forward on to the FBI as well.

Robert Stevenson, executive director of the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, says that state lawmakers pushing for more transparency were surprised when he told them a federal program to collect this data already existed. "Many have never even heard of the [FBI's] national database collection, even within law enforcement," he said.

Lawmakers in Michigan agreed that the state's police departments would report to the federal FBI database and those numbers would also be released to the public. After getting the Michigan Sheriffs' Association on board, 368 agencies, making up 90% of law-enforcement officers in Michigan, signed up to submit data on use of force. In the wake of recent protests, Michigan officials said they would release the state's police use-of-force data, which had been gathered in the joint effort with the FBI.

Police departments across the country should realize that collecting and analyzing this data serves everyone, Stevenson says. "Now we'll have the data to have that conversation, to actually lay it out [and say], 'Look, we're not massacring people left and right, and here's where we can do better,'" he says. "This gives us the opportunity to have that informed conversation without the misperceptions and misinformation."

Meanwhile, the reforms being debated in Congress, and their competing efforts to create a better database, remain in a stalemate. On June 24, Senate Democrats blocked debate on the Republican bill, which includes a data-collection proposal, for not going far enough. The following day, Democrats passed a sweeping police-overhaul bill in the House, which includes a provision for a national database that would collect this information in more detail and make it public, but that's unlikely to get past the Senate.

'If we don't know the data, how do we identify the problem?'

GEOFFREY ALPERT, criminology professor and use-of-force expert

Like previous efforts, neither bill includes a legal mandate that could be tested in court to answer the question of whether police can be compelled to report their data to the federal government. Even so, advocates hope the resulting legislation will move the country toward finally having a fuller picture of where and how often U.S. police officers use force, and on whom.

"I have to be tentatively optimistic," Alpert says. "I don't want to be here in 10 years when we have another horrible event and everyone relives the same thing again. We've got to see progress. We at least have to be able to say, 'Last time we got step one and step two done. What's next?'" —*With reporting by* TESSA BERENSON/WASHINGTON

How school reopenings became political

By Molly Ball

THE PRESIDENT PRACTICALLY SNARLED AS HE made the accusation. "They think it's going to be good for them politically, so they keep the schools closed," Donald Trump said in the East Room of the White House on July 7, referring to Democratic governors. "We're very much going to put pressure on governors and everybody else to open the schools."

With that, Trump waded into a debate that's come to the fore of America's pandemic response. Mere weeks before schools start, a brutal reality has descended on parents: after months of hunkering down with their kids, there may be no end in sight. The coronavirus is still raging, which means the school closures imposed as temporary measures in March will be difficult to reverse. Schools at every level are struggling to figure out when and how to resume in-person instruction. Most have not announced a path forward.

The debate is coming both too late and too soon. Too late because there's now scant time to devise a plan to fully reopen schools in a safe fashion. And too soon because the pandemic's jagged advance—and scientists' evolving understanding—make it impossible to know how things will look by Labor Day. So parents and teachers wait in limbo, anxious and enraged by the looming dilemma and the lack of federal guidance or support.

Trump entered the fray with his usual subtlety. "SCHOOLS MUST OPEN IN THE FALL!!!" he tweeted out of the blue on July 6. The issue came to the President's attention in part because White House staff were affected by the news that public schools in the D.C. suburbs of Fairfax County, Virginia, would offer just two days per week of in-school instruction, a former White House official told TIME. New York City, the nation's largest district, announced a similar "hybrid" plan on July 8.

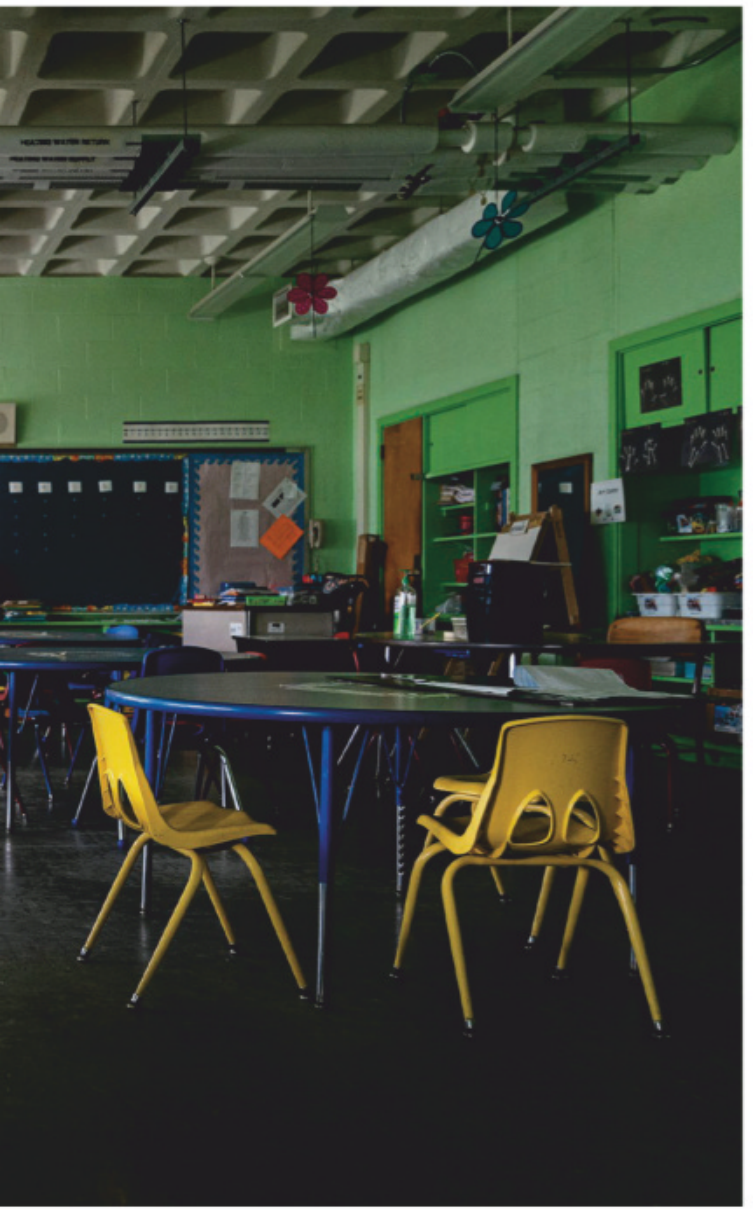
But the alternatives are as unclear as the need is evident. Children have been falling behind in their studies since the abrupt closures. Those in poor and minority communities—the same ones disproportionately ravaged by the virus—have been hardest hit. Many low-income children rely on public schools for food and social services; they are less likely to have parents who can work from home, or computers and wi-fi to connect to the "distance learning" curricula hastily devised in the spring. Meanwhile, millions of parents unexpectedly thrust into improvised day care and homeschooling are desperate for a break, businesses can't reopen if their workers don't have a place for their young children to go during the day, and teachers and school staff crave normality—even as they worry they're the ones most at risk.

An empty classroom at Sinclair Lane Elementary School in Baltimore

ERIN SCHAFF—THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX

DESPITE THE DISMAL RATINGS Trump has received for his handling of the pandemic, the question of how to handle school in the fall presented the President a political opportunity. Public-health experts mostly deplored Trump's drive to reopen consumer-oriented businesses such as bars and shops. But when it comes to schools, the experts are broadly on his side. The American Academy of Pediatrics "strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school." There is evidence that children—especially young children—are at minimal risk of getting the virus and appear not to spread it efficiently, either. The risk, the academy says, should be weighed against the harm children suffer when they miss out on the educational, social and emotional experiences schools provide.

But experts caution that getting back into classrooms safely is a balancing act. "When you say you're going to reopen, you can't just unlock a door," says Emily Oster, a Brown University economist. Many other countries have reopened schools in recent months without spurring new



outbreaks, but they've done so with extensive precautions, including protective equipment, reduced and restructured classes, distancing requirements, modified schedules and beefed-up staffing. On July 8, Trump tweeted that he disagreed with his own Administration's "impractical" public-health guidelines for schools.

These calculations have to be made with an eye to local conditions, everything from climate to density to demographics. "American localism—the fact that we have 14,000 school districts—is a great blessing in a situation like this," says Andy Smarick, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute and former Education Department official under George W. Bush. "We're going to see literally thousands of different approaches that hopefully reflect the needs of different communities, not a single national solution." The federal government should provide information and support, Smarick argues, not dictate or pressure local school boards.

Parents, teachers and advocates note that Congress was able to rush through multitrillion-dollar relief packages when small businesses were at risk. Yet the state and local governments that moved quickly to build field hospitals, source protective equipment and put business regulations in place now seem helpless to restore families' most important government support. "There are 3 million teachers and support staff out there who desperately want to hug their kids," says Lily Eskelsen García, president of the National Education Association teacher union. "But we will not be complicit in standing by and letting politicians cavalierly warehouse those kids without caring about their safety because, oh, we need their moms and dads to go back to work. We could do this in a safe, medically sane way, but it's going to take money. Why was that not even a question when it was Shake Shack that might have to lay people off and go bankrupt?"

Trump's demands for reopening have not been accompanied by pledges of more resources. Indeed, the Administration has yet to disburse most of the $13 billion allocated to education in the CARES Act. The Democratic-controlled House of Representatives pledged an additional $58 billion to education in the HEROES Act, which passed on a near party-line vote in May, along with billions more in aid to state governments whose budgets have been gutted by pandemic-related revenue declines. But that legislation has gone nowhere in the Republican-controlled Senate.

All this comes against a backdrop of a presidential election in which Trump is trailing in the polls, a deficit largely driven by suburban voters, especially the college-educated suburban women who swung decisively to Democrats in the 2018 midterms. Trump's campaign sees the school-reopening issue as a way to appeal to those voters, which is why the President and his allies have sought to cast it as a binary question pitting Trump and his concern for kids' education against the cautious, shut-it-down Democrats.

Yet most governors get far better ratings than the Administration for their handling of the pandemic, and Trump's opponent, Joe Biden, has proposed a detailed school-reopening plan. The upshot is that Trump's message may not be landing. A *USA Today*/Ipsos poll in May found 59% of parents of K-12 students weren't comfortable sending their children back to school full time. "Parents feel very sympathetic toward what school districts and teachers are dealing with," says Robin Lake, director of the Center on Reinventing Public Education at the University of Washington. "I find it disgusting to intentionally make students a pawn in all this."

Trump has squandered an opportunity to tap parents' frustration, says GOP strategist Liam Donovan. "There's a nonpolitical sense among working parents of all kinds that they can't send their kids back to school soon enough," Donovan says, "but the President has bigfooted it, and not in a thoughtful way." As usual, Trump has polarized the debate. The result may be angry parents flooding local school-board meetings this fall to yell at one another about mask requirements.

—With reporting by BRIAN BENNETT □

'We will not be complicit in standing by and letting politicians cavalierly warehouse those kids.'

LILY ESKELSEN GARCÍA, president, NEA teacher union

Best-selling novelist **David Mitchell** visits the Age of Rock

By Dan Stewart

IN DAVID MITCHELL'S NEW NOVEL, *UTOPIA Avenue,* a member of the 1960s psychedelic folk rock band that gives the book its name is asked by an interviewer which category its eclectic music falls into. "You're like a zoologist asking a platypus, 'Are you a ducklike otter? Or an otter-like duck?'" replies Jasper, the group's virtuosic guitar player. "Like the platypus, I don't care. We make music we like. We hope others like it too. That's it."

It's hard not to read this as a wink at Mitchell's own reputation for genre fluidity, given a body of work that encompasses historical fiction *(The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet),* bildungsroman *(Black Swan Green),* science fiction *(The Bone Clocks)* and a combination of the above (*Cloud Atlas,* for which he is best known). So, I ask the novelist over a recent video call, Are you a platypus? The 51-year-old chuckles. "All artists are. Actually, all human beings are. It's not just within art, it's what kind of person you are. We all hit the speed bump of reductivism." It's the price he accepts for his interest in "hybridizing genre," he says. Few, though, seem to pay as much attention when Ian McEwan or Margaret Atwood does it.

Mitchell qualifies among their ranks; twice short-listed for the Booker Prize, his work has been compared to that of Haruki Murakami, Thomas Pynchon and Anthony Burgess. But he occupies a field of his own. His eight novels are experimental but approachable. His sentences can be lyrical, but his prose is propulsive. Beneath the layers of references and unconventional structures lie lucid narratives. Mitchell's obsessions—beyond the fictional meta-universe he has created—are with human voyages of self-actualization; the process of figuring out who we are, and how we connect, in the brief time we have.

Speaking via video chat from the cottage in southwest Ireland where he has lived for 15 years, Mitchell is engaging and boyishly passionate about his latest interests. He jokes about his reputation as an introvert—of life stuck in lockdown, he says, "Yeah, but what else is new?"—and excitedly shows me his current reading material, a lavishly illustrated collection of Vincent van Gogh's letters. Reading about the painter's struggles put his own life as an artist in perspective. "Some measure of success is actually the greatest enabler," he says. "So reading this it makes me feel fortunate that I have a [readership]. In my experience, pain and poverty and failure isn't really very good for the writing life."

Yet this is the milieu that Mitchell's characters draw inspiration from in *Utopia Avenue.* The novel is a sprawling, immersive account of the British and U.S. music scene of 1967 and 1968, tracing the eponymous band's halting trajectory from penury in London to the crest of global stardom. A linear narrative mainly set in England, it's a departure from the time-hopping, continent-straddling works he is best known for. "It is maybe one of the most structurally straightforward things I've done," he says.

The group's rise is viewed mainly from the perspectives of three of the band members, each following their own journeys of self-discovery: folk singer Elf, bassist Dean and guitarist Jasper. As the book begins, penniless Dean is fleeing an abusive working-class upbringing. Elf is stifled by the expectations of her middle-class family. Jasper, the estranged scion of a Dutch aristocratic family, is grappling with the return of mental-health issues he thought he had long since left behind.

THE GERM FOR THE NOVEL was his love of the music of this era, Mitchell says—bands like Pink Floyd, Fairport Convention and the Grateful Dead that shunned conformity and found "new ways of putting a song together that hadn't really been done before." But he was also fascinated by these years as a pivot point, a time when the 1960s reached "a critical kind of ideological mass, where enough people thought that society was rebootable," he says. "You could disassemble the flawed or repressive structures of the old world and replace them with something more just and more equitable." Music, he adds, was the "medium of transmission."

Above all, it's a book about music—a fly-on-the-wall look at the realities of making a living from it, but also the process of writing and rehearsing songs. Mitchell has no background in music, but began learning guitar and piano while writing the book to lend authenticity to scenes where the characters try out new chord sequences and piece together songs. He interviewed musicians, and read roughly a dozen memoirs by survivors of the era and

MITCHELL QUICK FACTS

Let's dance
Mitchell has created a Spotify playlist inspired by *Utopia Avenue.*

Here, there and everywhere
Eagle-eyed readers can spot a key *Utopia Avenue* character in *The Bone Clocks.*

Time is on my side
Mitchell wrote a work to be placed in a time capsule until 2114, part of the Future Library art project.

CLARA MOLDEN—CAMERA PRESS/REDUX

absorbed details "like harvesting plankton," he says. He also went down a YouTube rabbit hole. The technology is "a great resource for novelists," he says. "If this was the year 2000, I'd have no way to find out what Syd Barrett's voice sounded like. Now it's easy. You just need a laptop."

This was especially important as the novel's fictional characters interact with a greatest-hits album of historical figures as their fame grows. Barrett, David Bowie, Brian Jones and many others wander in and out of the book, while one character shares a stage with Leonard Cohen and another trips with Jerry Garcia. Mitchell says all these scenes were the product of "close study" of their speech and language. "It behooves you to not start giving people character traits that they really didn't have," he says. "I also didn't want them to play an instrumental role in the plot, or co-opt them into an alternative universe where they didn't die or they had a huge impact on something." They're in the novel for much the same reason as the music—because that's how it actually was.

Utopia Avenue is maybe one of the most structurally straightforward things I've done.'

DAVID MITCHELL, on his departure from genre experimentation

BUT THIS BOOK also exists as a chapter in what Mitchell calls his "strange, ongoing übernovel." Characters recur and connect from book to book, players in a meta-narrative about a centuries-long battle between two groups of immortals. Here, regular readers will spot at least a dozen connections to his previous works, but Jasper's arc has special significance. (His surname, de Zoet, may suggest how.) Mitchell says that while he enjoys servicing fans who are "kind of immersed at the deepest level in my books," he also takes care not to alienate new readers. The novel's fantastical sequences can be read as the product of Jasper's mental illness, he says. "It's realism if you have read my books, but it's psychosis if you haven't."

He hints that Jasper may have a future role to play in the meta-novel, but next up he's working on a collection of his short stories, which he is rewriting so they are linked—similar in structure to his 1999 novel *Ghostwritten.* "It'll be more contemporary and it won't be historical," he says. "I'd like to write a 'now' book." He's also been working on a possible TV show and a film, though he's reluctant to divulge details. He previously did some credited work on a mooted reboot of *The Matrix,* whose original directors—the Wachowski sisters—also directed the 2012 adaptation of *Cloud Atlas.*

These kinds of collaborations are "great fun," Mitchell says, but also hugely important creatively. "Normally, I labor away for four years seeing nobody. I have no colleagues. Just try working with nobody but yourself for four years. It does your head in," he says. "Saying yes to one or two projects that take you outside the orbit of your habits is a great way of putting distance between your novels stylistically, and thematically. Hopefully it's one way you can evolve." ☐

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LightBox

Remembering her name

A Breonna Taylor mural at Chambers Park in Annapolis, Md., is captured by drone on July 5. Future History Now, an art nonprofit, partnered with the Banneker-Douglass Museum and the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture to create the work. Taylor, a 26-year-old Black woman, was shot and killed in her Louisville, Ky., home in March by police executing a "no knock" warrant as part of a narcotics investigation. No drugs were found. In June, one officer was fired, and the Louisville Metro Council unanimously voted to ban such warrants in the city, naming the policy Breonna's Law.

Photograph by Patrick Smith—Getty Images

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The View

HEALTH

THE POWER OF MASKS

By Gavin Yamey

At long last, we have made a truly game-changing scientific breakthrough in preventing the spread of COVID-19. We have found a disease-control tool that, when used properly, can reduce transmission by somewhere between 50% and 85%. The tool is cheap and remarkably low-tech. You can even make one at home.

INSIDE

WHAT IF YOU GIVE SOMEONE COVID-19?

DREAMING OF SINGING TOGETHER AGAIN

TROUBLING LEGACY OF WHITE WOMEN

The View is reported by Mariah Espada, Anna Purna Kambhampaty and Madeline Roache

If this tool were a vaccine or a medicine, we'd be high-fiving one another and popping the champagne, knowing we'd discovered a crucial means to help prevent the spread of the pandemic.

I'm talking, of course, about face masks. Face masks block the spread of respiratory droplets that can carry the novel coronavirus. But just as with so many other aspects of the response to COVID-19—including mass testing, contact tracing and the early use of stay-at-home orders—the U.S. is once again squandering this opportunity.

In many countries that have so far successfully controlled their COVID-19 epidemics, health experts, politicians and the public have fully embraced the use of face masks without controversy. A recent study found that nations—like Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam—where masks were widely used soon after their COVID-19 outbreaks began were more likely to keep death rates low (fewer than six deaths per million people) and to have shorter outbreaks.

A New York City parks employee hands out masks as the city moves into Phase 2 of reopening

YET IN THE U.S., where the death rate from COVID-19 is now 394 per million people, face masks have been weaponized for partisan purposes. Taking their cues from President Trump, who has refused to appear on camera wearing a face mask and has said Americans who wear masks are doing so to show their disapproval of him, many of his supporters now see wearing a face mask as an affront to personal liberty.

As a result of this alarming polarization, only 23 states and the District of Columbia are mandating face masks in public. Only four—Massachusetts, Maryland, Texas and West Virginia—have GOP governors. Some Republican-led states are trying to subvert local measures that require masks.

Rejecting face masks inevitably means embracing more COVID-19 cases and deaths. One U.S. study found that states with mask mandates had more rapid declines in daily growth rates of COVID-19, and estimated that mask use had prevented up to 450,000 cases by May 22. While researchers at the University of Washington now predict that the U.S. could reach 180,000 COVID-19 deaths by October, they say we could prevent 33,000 of these deaths if at least 95% of people wore masks.

That's right. We can avert the deaths of 33,000 of our parents, grandparents, siblings, co-workers, teachers, bus drivers, nurses, and store workers by just sticking a $1 piece of cloth over our noses and mouths.

So what's stopping us? One problem is the "me first" culture in the U.S., in which anti-maskers claim that their right to go around unmasked in public matters more than saving lives. What they don't seem to get is that while masks may protect the wearer, the more important reason to wear them is to protect others. What's more, the higher the proportion of people who wear masks, the lower the risk that the coronavirus will spread through the community, akin to herd immunity after vaccination.

This is why it is so important for governments to issue and enforce mask mandates. COVID-19 cases are on the rise again in 40 states, according to the Associated Press—and are growing exponentially in states like Arizona, Texas and Florida that acted too quickly to reopen businesses. The only way to control the dramatic rise in these hard-hit states will be to reinstate lockdowns and mandatory social distancing. Mass masking isn't the way to end a huge surge in COVID-19. Instead, it is one of the ways that we can help avoid repeated cycles of surge, lockdown and release.

There is plenty of evidence from countries around the world that widespread mask wearing—in combination with social distancing, handwashing and track-and-trace testing—will allow us to more safely do the things we so desperately want and need to do: go back to work, reopen schools, see friends and family, and rebuild our economy.

Wearing a face mask is not a sign of weakness. It is an act of solidarity, an expression that all of us—Democrats, Republicans and independents—have a role to play in defeating one of the greatest challenges we have faced in our lifetimes.

Yamey is a physician and professor of global health and public policy at Duke University

SHORT READS

Highlights from stories on **time.com/ideas**

Making an investment

Martin Luther King Jr. dreamed of guaranteed income as a way of combatting economic insecurity. Now 11 U.S. mayors have formed a coalition to work on that issue. **"Against a similar backdrop of racial and economic unrest, we mayors are bringing that dream to life,"** they write.

Temporary relief

The Supreme Court ruling in *June Medical v. Russo* was a win for abortion rights. But Kathryn Kolbert and Julie F. Kay, lawyers who have argued major abortion cases in the U.S. and abroad, say it's not enough: **"We cannot be complacent and rely upon the federal courts to preserve women's autonomy."**

Vision for the future

As Israel prepares to annex part of the West Bank, Salam Fayyad, former Prime Minister of the Palestinian National Authority, argues that the Palestinian leadership should rethink the 1988 peace initiative and its framework for a two-state solution: **"We need an agenda that empowers us to become the masters of our own destiny."**

MASKS: ALEXI ROSENFELD—GETTY IMAGES; SOCIAL DISTANCING: LIU GUANGUAN—CHINA NEWS SERVICE/GETTY IMAGES

THE RISK REPORT

Ethiopia faces a precarious political moment

By Ian Bremmer

THE JUNE 29 MURDER of activist, singer and political icon Hachalu Hundessa has ignited violence across Addis Ababa and other Ethiopian cities. This is the latest chapter in this country's tumultuous journey from authoritarian rule toward genuine democracy. Reports of vandalism, arson, robbery and murder have made national headlines. Some 1,200 people have been arrested. In the city of Ambo, police have shot and killed at least nine people, some of them mourners at Hundessa's funeral.

Ethiopia, Africa's second most populous nation, is no stranger to unrest. The country's constitution divides Ethiopia into ethnically based territories, but many disputes over boundaries have never been resolved. Oromo, the largest of Ethiopia's many ethnic groups, make up about one-third of the country's 112 million people, but they say they've been excluded from holding national power.

In 2014, in the Oromo-dominated city of Ambo, university students began demonstrations against a plan to expand Addis Ababa, the nation's capital, into the surrounding countryside and onto land that is part of the Oromo homeland. Confrontations between protesters turned deadly, triggering demonstrations across the country against its autocratic government. For Oromos, Hundessa's music provided the protest soundtrack. The expansion plans were scrapped, but only after hundreds were killed and thousands arrested.

Outsiders were startled by the violence, because Ethiopia was considered an economic success story. In the decade before the authoritarian government finally gave up power in 2018, Ethiopia's economy grew at 9.9% per year, and building projects produced some of sub-Saharan Africa's best roads, bridges and electricity grids. But the spoils weren't shared equally. Ethiopia is still a poor country. Unemployment among young people remains high. The protests finally forced Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn to step down.

ENTER ABIY AHMED, who was sworn in as Prime Minister in April 2018. Abiy committed himself to national reconciliation and political openness. He lifted the state of emergency, welcomed greater press freedom, released political prisoners and invited dissidents to return from exile. He ended 20 years of war with neighboring Eritrea. For all this, Abiy was awarded the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize.

The streets are the only place where the Ethiopian people can air a growing list of grievances

Then his job got harder. Abiy, an Oromo, has offered a vision of Ethiopian national identity that transcends ethnic divisions. Observers say some Oromos have been emboldened by Abiy's rise and have attacked other groups in revenge. Freeing political prisoners and welcoming dissent meant opening a Pandora's box of tribal grievance. When violence escalated after Hundessa's murder, Abiy shut down the Internet.

Without obvious suspects or clear motives for the killing, Abiy has hinted that Hundessa may have been murdered by Egyptian security agents acting on orders from Cairo to stir up trouble. Egypt and Ethiopia are locked in a dispute over construction of the controversial Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, an Ethiopian project which Egyptians say will divert water from the Nile. "Calls for war have echoed across Egyptian media and Twitter, though negotiations continue. But Prime Minister Abiy may just be looking for a scapegoat that can unite Ethiopians against a perceived common enemy. Unfortunately, the anger and fear in Ethiopia's largest cities now has few outlets. The Internet remains down, and Abiy has postponed a national election scheduled for August for one year in response to COVID-19. The streets are the only place where the Ethiopian people can air a growing list of grievances. ◻

QUICK TALK

The origins of social distance

Doctoral student Lily Scherlis discusses her research into the term social distancing *and its surprising history*

How did the term *social distancing* evolve? It's used as a euphemism for class and race in the 19th century. In the 1920s, the Social Distance Scale [describing comfort levels between people of different races] becomes a social-science tool. During the AIDS crisis, it's used to describe misguided fears of contagion. It's not until 2004 that the CDC picks it up to talk about airborne illness.

How did the idea become part of the study of race? The Social Distance Scale turns up in the wake of the summer of 1919, especially the Chicago race riots, in order to try to make sense of race. It makes it seem like people fit very neatly into these groups. It's just this huge reduction.

What do you hope people take away from your research? How much the term has been used to justify elites' sequestering themselves from marginalized or disenfranchised folks in the U.S. across 200 years.

—Olivia B. Waxman

Social distancing at a park in San Francisco on May 24

COMMUNITY

We think we gave our neighbor COVID-19

By Belinda Luscombe

A FEW DAYS BEFORE OUR LONGTIME NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR moved out of his New York City loft in late March, he texted us and asked if we would look after his fish and some plants, since he could not move into his new place for a while. "Sure," we texted back. "It's not like we're going anywhere." Our history of looking after things is spotty, but he needed a hand, and I thought it might be time to skill up.

His home and ours have only ever been separated by a semipermeable membrane anyway. We share a common outdoor space. We have each other's spare keys, use each other's appliances, have permission to just go in and borrow anything when the other is away. When we had young kids in the home, we hosted big pancake breakfasts. As they got older, we would let each other know when we could smell them smoking pot. We had a standing invitation to his dinner parties.

So he brought over his fish and plants and borrowed our ladder. He was masked, because of the movers. We were not, because we were just lolling about; it was pure luck that we were even dressed. It was a quick handover. We didn't touch. Two days later, we came down with COVID-19 symptoms. It was bad, especially for my spouse. Two weeks later, our neighbor texted to say he thought he had it too.

Acts that normally feel like the right thing to do can turn out to be very wrong

He has a baby, a wife and an elderly mother who was living nearby. When I read on her social-media page a week or so later that he was in the hospital with pneumonia, my stomach began to churn. We were not sure we were the ones who gave it to him—neither was he, for the record—but the possibility was horrifying. The self-recriminations were legion and grim: Why were we not more careful? How is it that we—who were fully aware of the dangers of the virus, the measures one was supposed to take to keep it in check and his family situation—still acted in a way that meant he could get infected? *What if he died?*

Having had the virus, I knew that people who check in too often can be a burden, but I occasionally texted his wife, warily monitored his mother's updates for any change in tone and sent him tips on things we did that helped. While he was in the hospital, I texted photos of the flourishing plants on his side of the deck to cheer him up. My husband did some moving-house-type favors. I changed the aquarium water, a lot. We were determined to prove we were responsible human beings. Even so, a couple of times a day, I'd have a sudden spike of anxiety and guilt as I remembered his situation.

IT'S VERY HARD to imagine being contagious when you don't feel sick, especially in familiar situations, like when you're in your own home or with good friends. This is this virus's most deadly aspect; it is spreading before its carriers even know they have it. It's the termite of diseases; by the time you put your foot through the floorboard, it's too late.

That is difficult to get used to. Mistakes will be made. We should have put on masks. We should have wiped down our ladder. We should have declined the fish. Discarded aquariums and plants are a run-of-the-mill moving story; the demise of a prominent sociologist because of his neighbors' carelessness is a tragedy. Acts that normally feel like the right thing to do—a favor for a friend, the celebration of a birthday or a wedding—can turn out to be very wrong.

So as I watch people emerging from their isolation and gravitating toward one another at parties and beaches, I want to hire a plane to fly with a banner saying, IF YOU LIKE THOSE PEOPLE, STAND BACK A BIT. Nobody is going out of their way to infect others, but the damned thing about this virus is that people have to go out of their way *not* to infect others. As communal beings we are drawn to each other, and as communal beings, we need to avoid each other for that very same other's sake.

But I also want to fly a banner over the homes of those who are staying in and judging those who slip up. This one would say, HUMANS: STILL ONLY HUMAN. Part of looking out for each other is understanding that well-intentioned people make mistakes and those mistakes are not more idiotic, often, than yours. This much we know about the virus: it's serious, contagious and, in more than 132,000 cases so far in America, fatal. That's dangerous enough without its tearing communities apart too. My neighbor survived; the fish didn't. (Too many water changes.) We're still friends. ◻

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOEY GUIDONE FOR TIME

FAMILY

No joy without singing

By Tom Vanderbilt

A FEW YEARS AGO, I BEGAN TAKING VOCAL LESSONS. LIKE many people, I was an enthusiastic, lifelong singer, at least in the privacy of my shower. But I wondered if I could actually acquire any skill in the discipline, enough that my family would stop flinching as I belted out the occasional tune around the house. As with any motor skill—what singing primarily is—it took a lot of work. But, gradually, I began staying more on pitch, expanding my range, improving my breath control.

I soon felt the need to do something with this singing. As I was hardly ready for a solo recital at Carnegie Hall, I decided to join a choir.

I signed up with a group called the New York Choir Project, largely on the strength of two things: First, they did songs by Oasis and Eminem. Second, and more important, they didn't require auditions. Even so, the early days were terrifying. I probably lip-synched half the time, taking shelter in the sonic envelope of my fellow choristers.

But a funny thing happened. Choir became a high point in my life. I'd close out normally dreary Mondays with that evening's rehearsal and leave on an absolute high. Small wonder, for as science and experience have shown, singing together is ridiculously good for us. There's a raft of evidence for how it improves our sense of well-being, releases a flood of beneficial hormones, lowers blood pressure and boosts immune response. The choir brought things to my life I wasn't even aware I was missing: new friends, a reassuring ritual, the challenge of doing something novel.

BUT THEN a not-funny thing happened: COVID-19. In early March, we were rehearsing energetically for a show. By the next week, the rehearsals, and the show, were history. Later, news would emerge of how a choir rehearsal in Washington State was a "superspreader" event that infected dozens and left two choir members dead.

In an operatic twist of tragic irony, this thing that was so good for people was now an epidemiologist's nightmare. Imagine a warm room, filled with recycled air, packed with people—the ideal distance between singers has been put at 18 to 24 in., but often we were literally rubbing shoulders—potentially emitting six times the percentage of airborne droplet nuclei as a roomful of people merely talking would. A dynamic engine for producing transcendent sound was now a virulent conduit for spreading pathogens.

As the spring weeks wore on, deprived of my voice, I turned to Smule, the popular karaoke app. It goes like this: using your phone and earbuds, you either sing one-half of a song or join someone else's prerecorded track. As in a kind of Facebook in song (come find me at the handle "adultbeginner"), you friend people, you "favorite," you leave comments. Singing into your phone with strangers may seem odd, but curiously enough, the old power of music to connect people can still come through. Smule says there are hundreds of "Smule babies" it knows of—the children of people who met through the app and started families. I'm not looking for love, but I've sung Sondheim with Indonesians and R.E.M. with Floridians, I've sung Spanish ballads with Germans and reggae anthems with Koreans. I've sung with people in their parked cars or in their bedrooms. I've made new singing buddies around the globe—there's nothing like opening up via the vulnerable act of singing to find out if you strike a chord with someone.

I've sung Sondheim with Indonesians, R.E.M. with Floridians and reggae anthems with Koreans

But I miss my real-world choir. I miss feeling the actual energy coming off of other people. I miss having an audience beyond my wife and daughter. Like any number of quarantined choirs—and choral singing is America's most popular performing art by participation—my choir has moved online, to the familiar Zoom grid. It's reassuring to see this sea of earbud-clad friendly faces, but as the technology isn't quite there, we can't all sing together live. I'm dreaming of the day our voices—and breath—reunite.

Vanderbilt is the author of Beginners: The Joy and Transformative Power of Lifelong Learning, *out in January*

‘Karen’ and the violence of white womanhood

By Cady Lang

WHEN YOU LOOK UP THE HASHTAG #KAREN ON INSTAGRAM, a search that yields more than 773,000 posts, the featured image is a screenshot of a white woman staring into the camera, pursing her lips into a smile as she touches a finger to her chin, a movement that’s at once condescending and cloying. The woman’s name is Lisa Alexander, but on the Internet, she’s most recognized as the “San Francisco Karen.”

In a clip that went viral in June, Alexander confronts James Juanillo, who is stenciling BLACK LIVES MATTER in chalk on the front of his own home, and demands to know if he is defacing private property. Juanillo, who identified himself in a social-media caption as a person of color, is seen telling her and her partner that they should call the police if they feel he is breaking the law. He later told ABC7 News that the couple did call the police, who he says recognized him as the resident instantly.

After Alexander and her partner were identified by their full names by online sleuths, her skin-care business was boycotted and he was fired from his job. Both Alexander and her partner released apology statements. In hers, she expresses regret for her behavior: “When I watch the video, I am shocked and sad that I behaved the way I did. It was disrespectful to Mr. Juanillo and I am deeply sorry for that.”

With her actions, Alexander joined a growing number of “Karens”—Internet shorthand for certain type of a middle-aged white woman—who have hit new levels of notoriety in recent weeks. Though the “Karen” meme began as a joke about white women with bad haircuts who ask to speak to the manager, and has existed on Reddit since at least 2017, according to Know Your Meme associate editor Adam Downer, it’s taken on a new meaning lately. Thanks to a flood of footage that’s become increasingly violent and disturbing, “Karens” have now become infamous online for their shameless displays of entitlement, privilege and racism—and their tendency to call the police when they don’t get what they want.

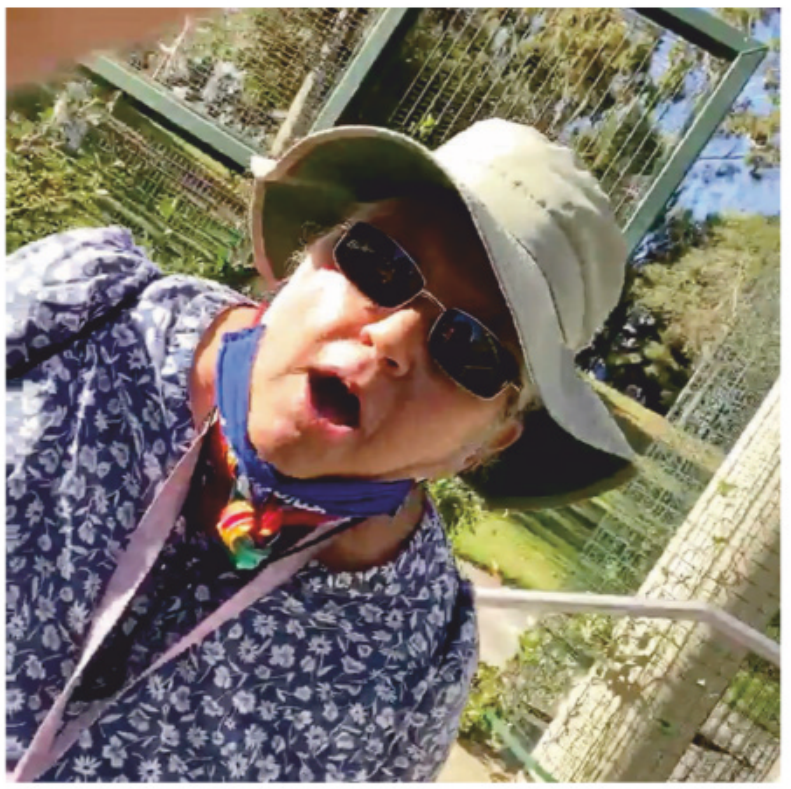
“When it got to the protests and the avalanche of incidents where white ladies were calling the cops, that’s where it began to get a bit more menacing,” Downer says.

In June alone, there was the “Karen” who was recorded spewing multiple racist tirades against Asian Americans in a park in Torrance, Calif., upon which the Internet discovered that she had a history of discriminatory outbursts, earning her the title “Ultra Karen”; the “Karen” in Los Angeles who used two hammers to damage her neighbors’ car as she told them to “get the f-ck out of this neighborhood”; and the “Karen” who purposely coughed on someone who had called her out for not wearing a mask at a coffee shop in New York City.

Perhaps most notably, there was Amy Cooper, the “Central Park Karen,” who on May 25—the day George Floyd was killed—called the police on Christian Cooper (no relation), a Black man who had asked her to leash her dog in a part of the park that required it, and claimed that “an African-American” man was “threatening” her. She was fired from her job, temporarily lost custody of her dog, and on July 6, the Manhattan DA said she would be charged for filing a false report. She told CNN after the incident she wanted to “publicly apologize to everyone” and claimed she was “not a racist” and “did not mean to harm that man in any way.” Christian Cooper accepted her apology, but urged viewers to focus on not just the clip but also the “underlying current of racism and racial perceptions.”

The ‘Karen’ meme is a reminder of the troubling legacy of white women weaponizing their victimhood

André Brock, an associate professor of Black digital culture at Georgia Tech, says it makes sense that this meme is resonating in this moment. He points to the convergence of the pandemic—“where we’ve been trapped in our house for six weeks with nothing to do but feel”—and the outrage over police brutality and systematic racism. Now when people see a “Karen” online, they’re not just observing a singular act. They’re reminded of a troubling legacy of white women in the U.S. weaponizing their victimhood.



Clockwise from top left: "San Francisco Karen"; a "Karen" in New York City; "Ultra Karen" in Torrance, Calif.; "Central Park Karen" in New York City

THE HISTORICAL NARRATIVE of white women's victimhood goes back to myths constructed during the era of American slavery. Enslaved Black men were posited as sexual threats to white women, the wives of slave owners, when in reality, slave masters were the ones raping enslaved girls and women. This narrative perpetuated the idea that white women, who represented the good and moral in American society, needed to be protected by white men at all costs, thus justifying racial violence toward Black men or anyone who posed a threat to their power. It was the overarching theme of *The Birth of a Nation,* the 1915 film that was the first movie to be shown at the White House, and is often cited as the inspiration for the rebirth of the KKK.

"If we're thinking about this in a historical context where white women are given the power over Black men, that their word will be valued over a Black man, that makes it particularly dangerous," says Apryl Williams, an assistant professor in communications and media at the University of Michigan and a fellow at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society at Harvard. White women's assumed virtue gives them power, she says, "and when you couple that with this racist history, where white women are afraid of Black men and Black men are hypersexualized and seen as dangerous, then that's really a volatile combination."

Williams says the visuals of "Karens" exploiting their privilege are challenging the long-standing ideas about who is a threat to whom, but she cautions against letting the at times humorous nature of the meme minimize the underlying truth about the danger white womanhood has posed to Black and brown lives.

"On the one hand, the humor is a way of dealing with the pain of the violence, so in that way it's helpful, but on the other hand, the cutesiness or the laughability sort of minimizes or masks the fact that these women are essentially engaging in violence," she says. "The fact that Amy Cooper is saying, 'I'm going to call the police and tell them that an African-American man is threatening my life' is a very racially violent statement and a racially violent act, especially if you look at it in a larger, broader historical context, and think about the way that Emmett Till's accuser [Carolyn Bryant] did the same exact thing, and it resulted in his death."

According to Williams, "Karen" memes can serve different purposes for different audiences. For white people, it can help them recognize a pattern of behavior that they don't want to be a part of but might be complicit in, and can be an easier way to have a conversation about white fragility, entitlement and privilege; it also holds them accountable for racism. For Black people, the memes can act as a news source, evidence and an archive of injustices, the attempts to control bodies and situations, or, as Brock puts it, "microaggressions that often scale to macroaggressions when the police are called in."

"I try to push back on the idea that memes are frivolous ways of articulating a particular phenomenon because in many ways, it's much more potent shorthand than me trying to explain to you exactly the way people are reacting to a certain situation," he says. "Social media is a platform for communicating feelings, and the stronger the feeling, the more viral things go."

According to Williams, the "Karen" memes—as well as other popular alliterative memes like "BBQ Becky" and "Permit Patty," which called out white women for calling the police on Black civilians who just want to grill in the park in peace or on 8-year-old Black girls selling water on the sidewalk, respectively—are part of a genre she calls "Black activist memes." The accounts of the real people who have experienced the racism documented in these memes and in the hashtag #LivingWhileBlack are helping to demand accountability and push forward legislation. An Oregon law enacted in 2019, for instance, allows victims of racist 911 calls to sue the caller.

"These memes are actually doing logical and political work of helping us get to legal changes or legislative changes," says Williams. "While, of course, they aren't a stand-alone movement on their own, they actively call out white supremacy and call for restitution. They really do that work of highlighting and sort of commenting on the racial inequality in a way that mainstream news doesn't capture." ◻

CAFÉ: INSTAGRAM; TWITTER (3)

Pfizer CEO **Albert Bourla** is raising expectations that the pharma giant will deliver a COVID-19 vaccine this fall

PFIZER IS INCREASINGLY CONFIDENT that its efforts to develop a coronavirus vaccine will be successful. In a July 7 interview with TIME, Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla said he believes that Food and Drug Administration approval could come as soon as October. On the basis of promising results in an early-stage trial released on July 1, Pfizer has dramatically increased the projections for the number of doses it will produce this year, to 100 million. Bourla also disclosed that the company has begun commercial talks with governments around the world about how many doses they will receive.

Bourla is so convinced his global pharmaceutical giant is on the right track that he has decided Pfizer will start producing the vaccine before receiving approval from the FDA. It's a move as risky as it is unorthodox. Pfizer's vaccine, being developed with its German biotech partner BioNTech, uses a novel genetics-based approach called messenger RNA; Bourla acknowledges that no messenger-RNA vaccine has ever been approved to prevent infectious disease to date.

Pfizer is set to launch a large-scale clinical trial later in July, which will involve 30,000 people at 150 locations by the end of the test period. Bourla, 58, who was born in Greece and trained to be a veterinarian before working his way up the ranks at Pfizer, plans to price the vaccine to make a profit, but believes governments should distribute the first doses to the most vulnerable, at no cost.

What did the data that Pfizer and BioNTech released on July 1 show?
That the vaccine in humans created the very robust immune responses in all individuals that received the vaccine. And those responses were also able to kill the virus. What we learned is that this vaccine can neutralize the virus.

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ROBERT DURON—COURTESY PFIZER

So it was a big moment?
For me, it was the moment when I saw the data, plus many other data that we haven't published yet, [that] made me say that until now I was thinking *if* we have a vaccine. Now I'm discussing *when* we're going to have a vaccine.

Let's talk timing. You said your reaction was not if but when. So when?
Well, let me be accurate and factual here. One, we will only know if the vaccine works when we have the final study. We have a lot of indications that make me feel that really it should make it … We should be able in the September time frame to have enough data to say if the vaccine works or not. And to submit that to the FDA. So for a potential approval in October, if we are lucky. It's feasible.

And when will it be ready to be distributed?
The most interesting and important thing is that if the vaccine is successful, which means that if we are convinced about it, effective and safe, and the FDA is convinced about it, effective and safe, we will have already manufactured doses that will be readily available.

So have you ever done that before, started manufacturing pre–FDA approval to get it ready to ship?
No, never.

Are you currently manufacturing the possible vaccine itself or just the bottles and the containers it will go in?
Pretty soon we will start manufacturing actual vaccine. We may not bottle it yet because we are waiting, but there are a lot of stages.

You've invested more than $1 billion in this. What if the FDA rejects the vaccine?
We will just have to write it off and call it a day. We will throw it away. It's only money we're going to lose. —EBEN SHAPIRO; *with reporting by* ALICE PARK

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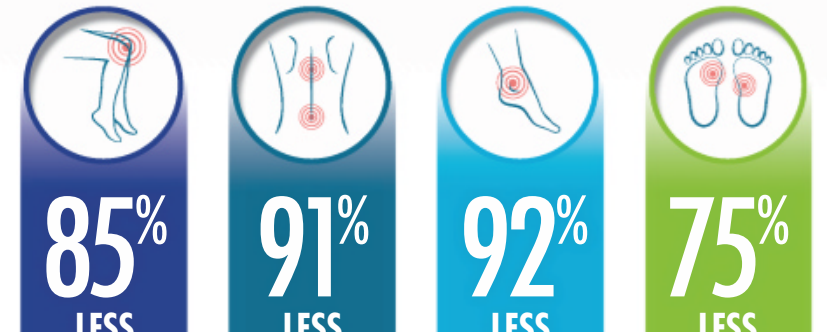

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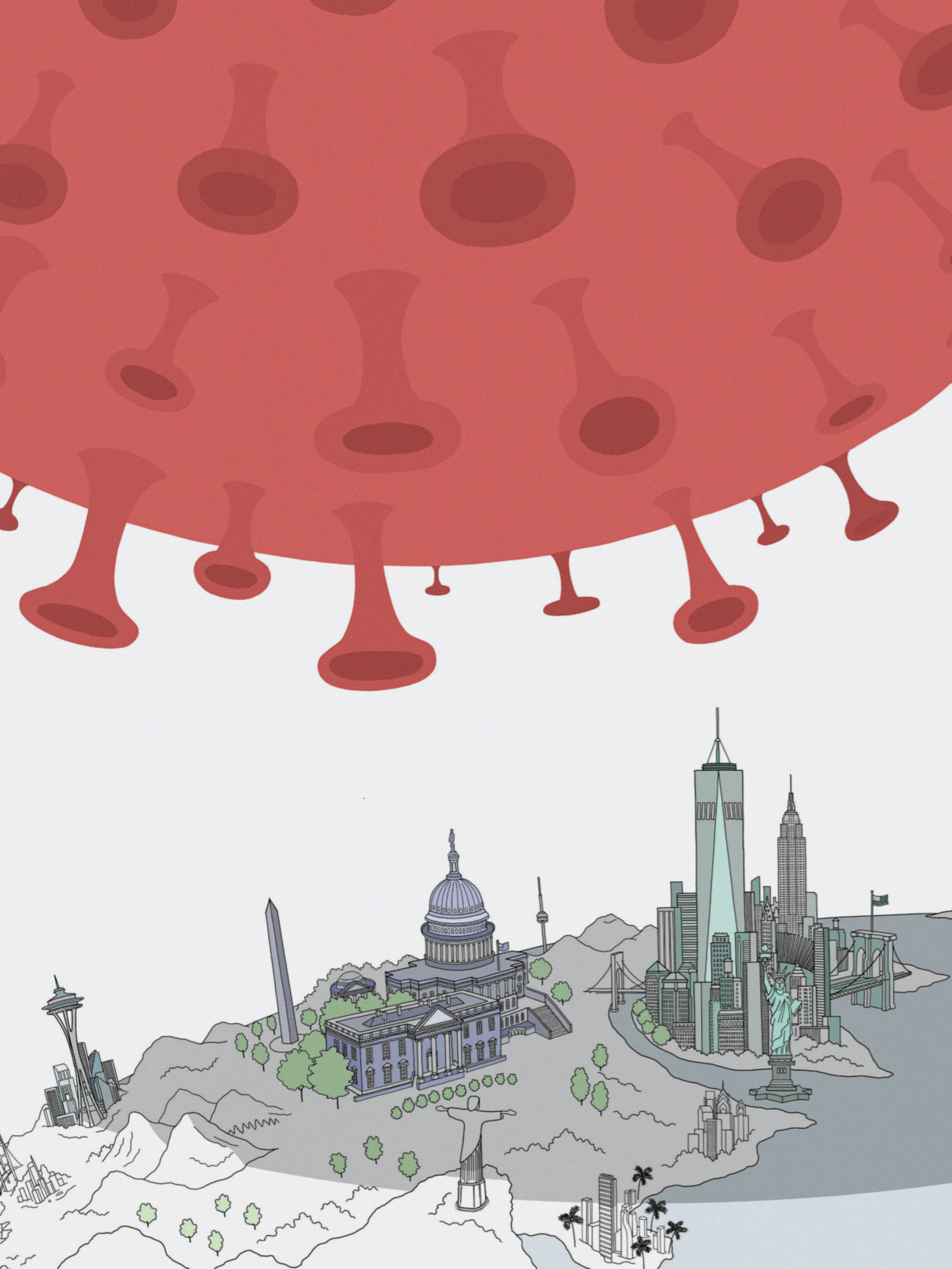

CLIMATE

STANDING AT A CLIMATE CROSSROADS

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PLUS, VIEWPOINTS FROM:

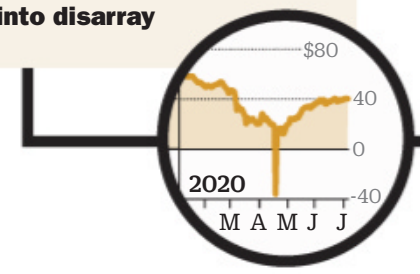
Stacey Abrams
Greta Thunberg
The Dalai Lama
… and more

THE DEFINING YEAR

The world was ready to tackle climate change. Then 2020 happened

BY JUSTIN WORLAND

On April 20, THE PRICE FOR CRUDE OIL fell to –$37.63 per barrel, the first time in history it dropped below zero, throwing the market into disarray



FROM OUR VANTAGE POINT TODAY, 2020 looks like the year when an unknown virus spun out of control, killed hundreds of thousands and altered the way we live day to day. In the future, we may look back at 2020 as the year we decided to keep driving off the climate cliff—or to take the last exit. Taking the threat seriously would mean using the opportunity presented by this crisis to spend on solar panels and wind farms, push companies being bailed out to cut emissions and foster greener forms of transport in cities. If we instead choose to fund new coal-fired power plants and oil wells and thoughtlessly fire up factories to urge growth, we will lock in a pathway toward climate catastrophe. There's a divide about which way to go.

In early April, as COVID-19 spread across the U.S. and doctors urgently warned that New York City might soon run out of ventilators and hospital beds, President Donald Trump gathered CEOs from some of the country's biggest oil and gas companies for a closed-door meeting in the White House Cabinet Room. The industry faced its biggest disruption in decades, and Trump wanted to help the companies secure their place at the center of the 21st century American economy.

Everything was on the table, from a tariff on imports to the U.S. government itself purchasing excess oil. "We'll work this out, and we'll get our energy business back," Trump told the CEOs. "I'm with you 1,000%." A few days later, he announced he had brokered a deal with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to cut oil production and rescue the industry.

Later in April, Ursula von der Leyen, the president of the European Commission, in a video message from across the Atlantic, offered a different approach for the continent's economic future. A European Green Deal, she said, would be the E.U.'s "motor for the recovery."

"We can turn the crisis of this pandemic into an opportunity to rebuild our economies differently," she said. On May 27, she pledged more than $800 billion to the initiative, promising to transform the way Europeans live.

For the past three years, the world outside the U.S. has largely tried to ignore Trump's retrograde position on climate, hoping 2020 would usher in a new President with a new position, re-enabling the cooperation between nations needed to prevent the worst ravages of climate change. But there's no more time to wait.

We're standing at a climate crossroads: the world has already warmed 1.1°C since the Industrial Revolution. If we pass 2°C, we risk hitting one or more major tipping points, where the effects of climate change go from advancing gradually to changing dramatically overnight, reshaping the planet. To ensure that we don't pass that threshold, we need to cut emissions in half by 2030. Climate change has understandably fallen out of the public eye this year as the coronavirus pandemic rages. Nevertheless, this year, or perhaps this year and next, is likely to be the most pivotal yet in the fight against climate change. "We've run out of time to build new things in old ways," says Rob Jackson, an earth system science professor at Stanford University and the chair

Sunrise over a power station in Adelaide, Australia, in 2019. City skies across the world have been clearer during the COVID-19 pandemic, but that's unlikely to last

PHOTOGRAPH BY TRENT PARKE

One of Los Angeles' most crowded highway interchanges was nearly empty during rush hour on April 24

of the Global Carbon Project. What we do now will define the fate of the planet—and human life on it—for decades.

The time frame for effective climate action was always going to be tight, but the coronavirus pandemic has shrunk it further. Scientists and policymakers expected the green transition to occur over the next decade, but the pandemic has pushed 10 years of anticipated investment in everything from power plants to roads into a monthslong time frame. Countries have already spent $11 trillion to help stem the economic damage from COVID-19. They could spend trillions more. "It's in this next six months that recovery strategies are likely to be formulated and the path is set," says Nicholas Stern, a former World Bank chief economist known for his landmark 2006 report warning that climate change could devastate the global economy.

We don't know where the chips will fall: Will a newfound respect for science and a fear of future shocks lead us to finally wake up, or will the desire to return to normal overshadow the threats lurking just around the corner?

WE FIND OURSELVES on the brink of climate catastrophe in large part because of the decisions made during a past crisis. As the world came out of the Great Depression and World War II, the U.S. launched a rapid bid to remake the global economy—running on fossil fuels. In the first postwar years, Americans moved to suburbs and began driving gas-guzzling cars to work, while the federal government built a highway system to connect the country for those vehicles. The single biggest line item in the Marshall Plan, the U.S. government program that funded the European recovery, went to support oil, which ensured that the continent's economy would also run on that fossil fuel. Meanwhile, plastic, an oil derivative, became the go-to building block for consumer goods after the U.S. had developed production capacity for use in World War II.

The underlying philosophy of economic development in this time period was a focus on gross national product, a term developed by U.S. government economists during the Depression, which included consumption as a proxy for prosperity: the more we consume, the better off we are, according to this model, which, in the postwar era, the U.S. assiduously spread abroad. The promise of endless growth also required an endless supply of oil to power factories, automobiles and jet planes. In 1945, President Franklin D. Roosevelt sealed a deal with Ibn Saud, the first King of Saudi Arabia, trading security for access to the country's vast oil reserves. Every U.S. President since, implicitly or explicitly, has continued that exchange.

The coronavirus pandemic is the most significant disruption yet to the postwar fossil-fuel order. The global economy is expected to contract more than 5% this year, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This is a challenge so big that it has also created a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to change direction.

This moment comes just in time. In 2018, a landmark report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the U.N.'s climate-science body, warned that allowing the planet to warm any more than 2°C above preindustrial levels would drive hundreds of millions of people into poverty, destroy coral reefs and leave some countries unable to adapt. A 2019 analysis in the journal *Nature* identified nine tipping points—from the collapse of the West Antarctic ice sheet to the thawing of Arctic permafrost—that the planet appears close to reaching, any one of which might very well be triggered if warming exceeds 1.5°C. "Going beyond 2°C is a very critical step," says Johan Rockstrom, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, "not only in terms of economic and human impact but also in terms of the stability of the earth."

To keep temperatures from rising past the 1.5°C goal, we would need to cut global greenhouse-gas emissions 7.6% every year for the next decade, according to a report

from the U.N. Environment Programme (UNEP). That's about the level the COVID-19 pandemic will reduce emissions this year, but virtually no one thinks a deadly pandemic and accompanying unemployment is a sustainable way to halt climate change—and recessions are typically followed by sharp rebounds in emissions.

To achieve the 1.5°C goal without creating mass disruption has always meant thoughtfully restructuring the global economy, moving it away from fossil-fuel extraction slowly but surely. Scientists and economists agree this is the last opportunity we have to do so. "If we delay further than 2020," says Rockstrom, "there's absolutely no empirical evidence that it can be done in an orderly way."

As of late June, countries had spent some $11 trillion on measures to halt the pandemic and stem its economic impact, according to the IMF. Economists say that's not enough, and countries and central banks plan to keep doling out

PREVIOUS SPREAD: MAGNUM PHOTOS; LOS ANGELES: STUART PALLEY; ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX FINE FOR TIME

VIEWPOINT

We must be antiracist in our fight against climate change

By Asmeret Asefaw Berhe

As a Black scholar, I am usually one of the few dark-skinned people in scientific, educational, communication and policy spaces searching for natural solutions to climate change. Demographics of a group are a window into its culture, equity and inclusivity, so the absence of voices of marginalized communities means that the issues that concern us do not get the attention they need.

Take soils, for instance. In the context of human security, climate change is a threat multiplier, meaning it exacerbates the existing threat of food and nutritional insecurity for nearly a billion people around the world—a significant percentage of whom are Black or brown—who don't have access to adequate food and water. The interconnected nature of the climate, soil systems and the future of global food production demands that we simultaneously address climate change and rehabilitation of degraded soils. But partly due to the lack of diversity in the climate-change community, a disproportionate focus is put on the physical impacts of increasing atmospheric temperatures on melting polar sea ice, rising sea level, thawing permafrost and the plight of polar bears. These are all important issues, but my research over the past 20 years has convinced me that soils should be a priority too.

The soil system stores four times more carbon than the atmosphere and controls the transfer of greenhouse gases between the land and the atmosphere. Excessive use and abuse of soil by human economies have caused the loss of almost 120 billion metric tons of carbon to the atmosphere in the past 200 years. But natural solutions—including reduced tillage, preventing overgrazing, reforestation and adding carbon to soil from current waste streams—exist and can draw down a third of the atmospheric carbon dioxide we need to reduce global warming. They also come with the co-benefits of improving soil health that is critical for food and nutritional security.

When people hear "Black lives matter," they don't often think of climate change. But the location and nature of climate change's worst effects on human society are geographically delineated by persistent legacies of racism, slavery and colonialism. The climate-change community desperately needs to address historic inequities in access to resources and opportunities as well as socioeconomic and political factors that are the root causes of the climate crisis, and we must adopt mitigation and adaptation strategies informed by local and Indigenous knowledge. Climate change cannot be another global crisis—like malaria or the many extreme pollution episodes—that is propagated by and solved for fair-skinned folk in the northern hemisphere while communities of color globally continue to suffer as a result of unjust practices and policies that continue to silence our voices.

Berhe is a professor of soil biogeochemistry and the Falasco Chair in Earth Sciences at the University of California, Merced

money to help the global economy stay afloat. There are lots of things we could be buying with that money that would make our lives better and protect us from climate disaster. In recent months, leading institutions across the spectrum have offered approaches that are varied in their specifics but generally similar in philosophy: invest in greener infrastructure.

The International Energy Agency (IEA), for example, calls for an annual $1 trillion investment in clean energy for the next three years. At a cost of about 0.7% of global GDP, this would represent a small portion of the funds spent to combat COVID-19 but could be transformative. Expansion and modernization of electric grids would allow for easier flow of renewable energy. Governments could buy out gas-guzzling vehicles, pushing consumers to go electric. Homes and buildings could be retrofitted to consume less energy.

This spending would also help solve the immediate problem of lost jobs and economic stagnation by creating nearly 10 million jobs worldwide and increasing global GDP by 1.1%, meaning it would add more to the economy than it costs. Importantly, green investment would result in a slew of "co-benefits." For example, some rural communities would receive access to electricity for the first time. For another, air pollution would decline all over the world. "If governments do not make use of this opportunity, they may miss a very important tool for the economic recovery," says Fatih Birol, head of the IEA.

But this moment is not just about opportunity; even maintaining the status quo is dangerous. Research from the UNEP released last year shows that if nations stick with current plans to reduce emissions, global temperatures will rise more than 3°C by the end of this century.

FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS, climate advocates had positioned 2020 as critical in the fight against climate change. Under the Paris Agreement, countries are required to submit new plans to reduce emissions in 2020, and climate diplomats had planned a series of meetings around the world this year to build momentum, culminating with the U.N. climate conference in Glasgow, in November.

The Glasgow event was postponed a year, but the coronavirus pandemic has created a new sort of momentum. Empty city streets have been transformed into pedestrian space with cars banished, and many cities say they're not going back. The oil industry has faced a reckoning, with the U.S. benchmark price at one point in mid-April dropping into negative territory and investors fleeing the industry; smaller firms filing for bankruptcy; and some of its biggest players writing down assets they say have lost their value.

With the writing beginning to appear on the wall, many countries are starting to build a different world. In South Korea, the newly re-elected government has promised a $10 billion Green New Deal to invest in renewable energy and make public buildings energy efficient. In Costa Rica, one of a few developing countries to commit to eliminating their carbon footprint by 2050, leaders have created a new fee on gasoline to fund social-welfare programs and are planning to issue new green bonds to fund the next stage of climate adaptation programs. Rwanda, which has a GDP of roughly $9 billion, has adopted an $11 billion plan to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change, which includes a push for buses, cars and motorcycles to go electric. "We cannot afford to have the same mode of recovery, the same mode of doing business, the same mode of economic activity," says Juliet Kabera, director general of the Rwanda Environment Management Authority.

International institutions are playing a critical role nudging these countries. The IMF, which has said it "stands ready" to use its $1 trillion lending capacity to stave off the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, has made climate resilience a key criterion for its lending. This has already paid dividends: some 50 nations, including dozens of developing countries, committed in late June to address climate change in their coronavirus recovery plans.

"It's a great catalyst to think about building a new world," says Costa Rican President Carlos Alvarado Quesada. "Whatever we decide as a country or as a global community in the next six or 10 or 12 months is going to determine what happens on the earth for the next decade."

Nowhere will such an approach have as large an impact as in the E.U. When compared with countries, the bloc is the world's second largest economy and third largest emitter. Its pandemic recovery will help achieve the proposed target of halving its emissions in 10 years by spending $100 billion annually to make homes energy-efficient, $28 billion to build renewable energy capacity and up to $67 billion for zero-emissions trains. The European investment in going green will hurt coal-mining jobs in places like Poland and the Czech Republic, but the European recovery program will pay billions to retrain the workers and transition them to other industries. The measure awaits approval by the member countries, and the details are subject to negotiation, but observers do not expect the direction of the policy to change.

Other major players in the global economy, most notably the U.S. and China, have not made as clear commitments to a green-tinged recovery. Upcoming decisions in both of those countries, which combined are responsible for nearly half of global emissions, are urgent.

China is being pulled in two directions as it develops a plan that will set the course of its development—and, by extension, its emissions—for the next half decade. In March, as China's coronavirus epidemic began to subside, the nation's powerful Politburo Standing Committee, which is made up of senior leaders of the Communist Party, including President Xi Jinping, endorsed a proposal to expedite $1.4 trillion in spending on so-called "new infrastructure" that includes electric-vehicle charging stations and high-speed rail, as well as 5G technology, which wouldn't cut emissions per se but would help advance the country's tech sector rather than its heavy industry, stimulating economic growth with lower emissions.

But the degree of commitment to those green recovery measures remains unclear. The Politburo Standing Committee's push is unfunded, leaving provincial governments to follow through. So far, the evidence on the ground has not been encour-

'WE'VE RUN OUT OF TIME TO BUILD NEW THINGS IN OLD WAYS.'

—ROB JACKSON, professor at Stanford University and chair of the Global Carbon Project

aging. Local Chinese governments have approved new coal-fired power plants this year at the fastest clip since 2015—a surefire way to stimulate economic growth and emissions. And the country is reportedly planning to ramp up production of oil and natural gas. Demand has fallen, but cheaper oil and gas typically stimulate the economy. Abroad, China continues to fund emissions-intensive projects through its Belt and Road Initiative. In Africa, for instance, China is financing new coal-fired power plants, even as many international financial institutions have walked away from the energy source.

External pressure is likely to force the issue, and the E.U. is trying to offer just that. To push China and others along, the bloc is crafting a new tax on imports from countries that aren't reducing emissions. Climate and trade are both currently being discussed by officials behind the scenes and were planned to be on the top of the agenda at a now postponed September summit between the E.U. and China. "Europe is a very important market for the Chinese," says Laurence Tubiana, the CEO of the European Climate Foundation and a key architect of the Paris Agreement. "China can be secured in its potential exports to Europe by understanding that it can secure positive trade relations by increasing its climate ambition."

Still, when it comes to turning the climate ship around, there's no substitute for the U.S., and the country has already missed opportunities. For example, before doling out bailout money, France demanded that Air France stop operating emissions-intensive short routes, and Austria forced Austrian Airlines to agree to cut its emissions 30% by 2030. Contrast that with the U.S., where the government decreed that to receive federal dollars, airlines could not drop any of their destinations—even if that meant flying planes empty—and Congress rejected an attempt from several Democratic Senators to attach green strings to the airline bailout.

It's hard to imagine anything substantive so long as Trump is President. He and his GOP allies in Congress have an effective stranglehold on any policy that could push the U.S. to decarbonize, and thus far they have rejected big legislation to address climate change—portraying it as "socialist" and part of the Green New Deal that the progressive wing of the

ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX FINE FOR TIME

VIEWPOINT

Take climate action at the ballot box

By Stacey Abrams

Halfway into the year, our nation has reached a precipice: a criminal-justice system infected by racism that continues to take Black lives, avoidable deaths that keep climbing as COVID-19 sprawls, the scourge of voter suppression, and an economy that has left millions of Americans wondering how they will survive. Teetering on the edge in the midst of this tumult, a familiar peril still looms—inaction on climate change threatens the future.

I understand the impulse to divert our attention toward seemingly more immediate challenges. But extreme weather continues, natural disasters are intensifying, polar ice is still melting, sea levels are rising, and the human cost remains stubbornly high. The reckoning is felt by those who struggle to breathe as carbon-dioxide levels reach their highest point in 800,000 years and those who cannot afford their utility bills given that 19 of the 20 warmest years on record have occurred since 2001. And as with the public-health crisis, police brutality and economic collapse, communities of color will suffer the disproportionate impacts of climate change.

Our obligation to confront this catastrophe has not changed; to continue on our current trajectory without aggressive action will doom millions. But what has changed is the calculus the environmental movement ought to make. The work to make advanced energy policy a reality and to actuate climate-mitigation efforts requires engaging a diverse array of voices. The most effective climate-action coalition will center discussions about how delay will affect their neighborhoods and daily lives. Only then can we build alliances to overwhelm the system with our votes.

Climate change may be one of the greatest threats to our democracy, but the right to vote is our most powerful tool to defeat it. We can no longer simply appeal to the hearts and minds of our elected leaders. Climate actors must work to strip the skeptics of their power. Change comes when those in authority risk being swept away. It becomes permanent when we elect climate warriors up and down the ballot.

If our vote did not count, the forces trying to take it away would not be so desperate, throwing up roadblocks through voter-roll purges, racially discriminatory voter-identification laws and five-to-six-hour lines to vote. We know the power voting has on national efforts to tackle climate change. Voting brought us to the table as President Obama signed on to the Paris Agreement. Then not voting devastated our progress, as President Trump—whose election was decided by fewer than 80,000 votes across three states—abandoned the accord. In 2020, the choice is ours once again.

When we commit to stewardship of our resources on behalf of all communities, we carve out more time for future generations. Let us be ruthless in our righteousness and boundless in our boldness in the fight for climate justice. Because when we fight, we win.

Abrams, the former Georgia house Democratic leader, is the author of Our Time Is Now *and the founder of Fair Fight and the Southern Economic Advancement Project*

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Democratic Party proposed last year to the derision of Republicans. Instead, the Trump Administration is reportedly preparing a $1 trillion infrastructure package focused on roads and bridges. "If we label it green, that would actually probably decrease its chances of being included," said a Democratic congressional aide who works on energy and climate.

So the future of U.S. emissions will likely fall to the winner in the fall. Joe Biden, the former Vice President and presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, is well aware of the role the pandemic recovery will play in shaping emissions. Biden oversaw the last U.S. stimulus a decade ago in the midst of the Great Recession. That package totaled nearly $800 billion, with $90 billion for clean-energy measures, and helped launch many of America's green advances, including funding Tesla's transformation from a boutique car company to the world's most valuable auto manufacturer; funding a program that doubled the fuel efficiency of Daimler Trucks' Freightliner model; and supporting the weatherization of more than a million homes to reduce residential energy consumption. That package created 900,000 jobs and turned a profit for the government, even as it suffered high-profile failures like the collapse of the Solyndra solar-panel company.

Last year, Biden released a proposed Green New Deal, calling for $1.7 trillion in spending over 10 years on everything from electric vehicles to reducing pollution in low-income communities—all in service of the U.S.'s achieving net-zero emissions by the middle of the century. Since the coronavirus pandemic began, Biden has doubled down: he's touted his Green New Deal and has appointed a committee that includes both longtime Washington climate advocates like former Secretary of State John Kerry and emerging leaders of the Democratic progressive wing like current New York Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez to craft new climate policy. Top congressional Democrats, signaling support for a big climate package, unveiled a 500-page legislative road map on June 30 that includes tax incentives and infrastructure spending to eliminate the country's carbon footprint by 2050. It won't become law this year, but it sends a signal that the issue will be on the legislative agenda if Biden wins in the fall.

"We've got to strike now. We can't let this go," Biden said at a League of Conservation Voters virtual event on June 16. "Not because of me but because of the opportunity." Importantly, Biden has promised to re-engage with the rest of the world on the issue, including by helping fund climate measures in developing countries. China wouldn't be eligible to receive such funding, but the nation is keeping a close eye on how U.S. climate policy is unfolding. China has delayed several key decisions and signaled its intention to hold off making new climate commitments until after the U.S. presidential election. Even after three years of Trump's tearing down the U.S.'s global reputation on climate, it turns out the U.S. is still leading the world. In what direction remains to be seen.

TO MANY WHO STUDY CLIMATE, the pandemic looks eerily familiar. At first, the new virus seemed distant and inconsequential to most people, so long as you weren't in the eye of the storm. The rest of the world watched in amazement as China shut down Wuhan. Horror stories of patients dying in hallways in Milan shocked the U.S., but not enough to make the nation prepare. In late February, at the last Democratic primary debate before voting in the critical state of South Carolina, moderators didn't ask about the issue until one hour and 15 minutes into the discussion, and spent less than five minutes on it.

Researchers estimate that by the time the U.S. collectively woke up to the stakes of the pandemic on March 11—the day Tom Hanks said he tested positive, the NBA canceled its season and Trump banned travelers from Europe—thousands of people had already been infected in the country. In the few months since, more than half a million people have died worldwide, including some 100,000 in the U.S., and there's no sign we'll be rid of the virus anytime soon.

'WE'VE GOT TO STRIKE NOW. WE CAN'T LET THIS GO.'

—**JOE BIDEN**, presumptive U.S. Democratic presidential candidate

The story of climate change has unfolded over decades, but its trajectory is much the same. For years, we've watched as the evidence has grown. We've gaped as superstorms have battered the globe from Bangkok to Houston and unprecedented heat waves have popped up, killing a few thousand here and there. As I write this, it's 100°F in Siberia, and wildfires are raging in an area infamous for its yearlong ice. "These are the warning signs" of cataclysmic climate change, says Gail Whiteman, a professor at Lancaster University who runs an Arctic research program.

If Wuhan and Milan offered a preview of what the U.S. is now experiencing with COVID-19, where should the country look for a glimpse of a climate-changed world? Last year, I traveled to Fiji and found that for many of those living on the small Pacific Islands, on the front lines of brutal storms and sea-level rise, climate change is already the defining issue. If a storm destroys a school, students can't learn. If the sugarcane crops are flooded, farmers lose their jobs. If sea levels rise too much, entire communities disappear. Climate concerns are at the center of their economies and the center of their development plans.

"This can't be the purview of even 25,000 or 40,000 or even 100,000 people," says Christiana Figueres, who led the U.N. climate-change body during the Paris climate talks. "This has got to permeate through every single corner, every single channel, every single flow of economic development and modernization. It's got to become the new norm."

That will come one way or another. Every country will be combatting climate change for the foreseeable future; the change in climate we're experiencing today is in large part the result of emissions that happened more than a decade ago. However, we do have a choice of how bad it will get. If we invest in preserving nature and transitioning our energy system today, we will stave off the worst, giving us the ability to manage the hurricanes and floods as they come. If we wait, we'll be stuck flat-footed when the worst arrives, watching in dismay as the temperature curve ticks up and up.

The choice is ours. We just don't have much time to decide. —*With reporting by* LESLIE DICKSTEIN, ALEJANDRO DE LA GARZA *and* JOSH ROSENBERG

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NATION

The four-year plan for America

By Jeffrey Kluger

SCOTT EISEN—GETTY IMAGES

Climate protesters at a Biden campaign event in 2019 raised pressure on the presumptive nominee

DONALD TRUMP HAS smashed a lot of environmental china in four years. To name a few instances: he pulled out of the 2015 Paris Agreement (a move that becomes official on July 6, 2021); loosened automotive-mileage and power-plant-emission standards; and sought to eliminate the protected status of the sage grouse, opening up 9 million acres to oil and gas extraction.

Reasonable minds may differ on the wisdom of any one of those moves, but no one can deny the unprecedented sweep of Trump's policies. Data from Harvard Law School's Environmental and Energy Law Program and Columbia University's Sabin Center for Climate Change Law show that the President has signed more than 100 administrative rules, Executive Orders and acts of deregulation, 66 of which have gone into effect.

If presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden defeats Trump in November, what could he do in his own four years to undo the work of the Trump era? "The biggest, flashiest thing would be for Biden to stand up on day one and say the U.S. is recommitting itself to Paris," says Jody Freeman, director of the Harvard program. "We should make clear we're going to take back the reins we've relinquished."

It wouldn't necessarily be easy. The U.S. would not simply be permitted to rejoin the agreement but would have to negotiate its way back in. One way to improve its chances would be for the U.S. to present an even more ambitious greenhouse-gas reduction target than it had before, says Joseph Goffman, the Harvard program's executive director. That original target for the U.S. was a cut of 26% to 28% below 2005-level carbon emissions by 2025. If Biden agreed to more, he might win the U.S. the favor of the other 196 signatories to the pact, but then he would have to deliver; that's where the work on the domestic side would begin.

AMERICA'S LARGELY dysfunctional Congress is usually a bad thing. In the case of recent environmental policy, however, it could be a plus, because Trump's environmental moves are not fixed in legislative cement but written in the softer sand of Executive Orders. Biden could simply reverse the Trump reversals by issuing his own day-one Executive Orders. But any regulatory change requires public comment and review, as well as a rationale that can withstand legal challenges. Those day-one moves might thus not yield results for a year or three.

What would come next would go beyond the mere reparative. Nobody expects a Green New Deal out of a hypothetical Biden Administration. Freeman believes Biden will look to environmental laws now on the books like the Clean Air Act of 1970 and apply them more strictly to advance a green agenda. On June 30, the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis did unveil an ambitious plan for the U.S. to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050—something Biden could embrace, though its chances would likely depend on the Democrats' holding the House and flipping the Senate as well. Biden could also, Freeman says, attach climate policies to coronavirus-related economic-recovery bills that are likely to pass.

The environment has never been Biden's animating passion. He markets himself instead as more of a Mr. Fix-It, a President who will set right what he sees as the serial messes of the past four years and then try to move beyond them. The environment will be one of his biggest cleanup jobs of all. ◻

CLIMATE

TURN THE TIDE

This was meant to be the year the world agreed on a plan to save the oceans. It still can

BY ARYN BAKER /

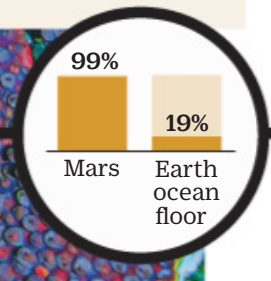
SNOW ISLAND, ANTARCTICA

FOR MICK BARON, THE GIANT KELP forests of Tasmania were a playground, a school and a church. The former marine biologist runs a scuba-diving center on the Australian island's east coast, and rhapsodizes about the wonders of the seaweed's dense habitats. "Diving in kelp is one of the most amazing underwater experiences you can have," the 65-year-old says, likening it to flying through the canopy of a terrestrial rain forest. "You won't find a single empty patch in a kelp forest … From the sponge gardens on the seafloor all the way up to the leaves on the surface, it's packed with life."

Or rather, it was. In late 2015, a marine heat wave hit eastern Australia, wiping out a third of the Great Barrier Reef, and the kelp forests Baron had been exploring for most of his life. "We were diving in a nice thick forest in December," says Baron. "By end of March, it looked like an

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS LEIDY

Despite the ocean floor's proximity and its essential role in human survival, we have MAPPED LESS OF ITS TOPOGRAPHY than the surface of Mars



asphalt driveway." Recurring heat waves have prevented kelp and coral from recovering; marine temperatures on Australia's east coast are on average 2°C higher than a century ago, an increase scientists attribute to rising greenhouse-gas emissions. "The ocean is deceptively fragile," says Baron. "Two degrees doesn't sound like much, but not many species can handle that kind of temperature change."

Baron, a gregarious, bearded and perennially sunburned Australian, introduced generations of divers to Tasmania's kelp cathedrals. His own grandchildren, he says, will have to learn about them from his YouTube videos. Nearly 95% of eastern Tasmania's kelp forests are gone, a preview of what is to come for the ocean as a whole. "Tasmania's kelp forests are the poster child for what climate change means for our oceans," he says. "What is happening here is what will happen everywhere else in a decade or two."

HUMAN BEINGS OWE their life to the sea. Four in 10 humans rely on the ocean for food. Marine life produces 70% of our oxygen; 90% of global goods travel via shipping lanes. We turn to the sea for solace—ocean-based tourism in the U.S. alone is worth $124 billion a year—and medical advancement. An enzyme used for COVID-19 testing was originally sourced from bacteria found in the ocean's hydrothermal vents. The ocean also acts as a giant planetary air conditioner. Over the past century, the ocean has absorbed 93% of the heat trapped in the atmosphere by greenhouse-gas emissions. "If all that heat hadn't been taken up by the ocean, we'd all be living in Death Valley conditions by now," says marine-conservation biologist Callum Roberts at the U.K.'s University of York.

But we humans have also been squeezing life out of the sea. Increased CO_2 levels in the atmosphere have made the ocean more acidic, threatening food chains. Warming waters are not only killing sea life, they are also changing currents and affecting global weather patterns. Meanwhile we dump 8 million tons of waste into the ocean a year, in addition to agricultural and industrial runoff that poisons coastal areas. At the rate we are harvesting fish, by 2050 there will likely be more plastic than fish in the oceans. A 2019 report by the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned that without "profound economic and institutional transformations," there would be irreversible damage to oceans and sea ice.

Vibrant coral off the coast of Papua New Guinea, which is noted for its extraordinary biodiversity of coral reefs

This was supposed to be the year those transformations began. A series of international policy meetings in 2020 was meant to set global targets for managing fish populations, restoring biodiversity and controlling pollution. As it did with so

much this year, the coronavirus pandemic put those talks on hold. Nonetheless, environmentalists, scientists, policymakers and ocean advocates are working desperately to keep the momentum going, aware that this might be the last, best chance they have to reverse the tide. "What's the phrase? Never let a good crisis go to waste? As we restart the economy, this is the chance to reset our goals for a healthy ocean," says Carlos M. Duarte, a Spanish marine biologist at the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology in Saudi Arabia. "We have a very narrow window of opportunity where we can actually still be effective. Twenty years from now, it will be too late."

Duarte and Roberts have co-written a sweeping new study published in the journal *Nature* that offers a blueprint for how the ocean might be restored within a generation. The proposed measures would cost billions of dollars a year, but the return on investment would be 10 times as high in increased biodiversity, fish stocks, jobs and tourism revenue, says Roberts. "We have seen over and over again that given a chance, ocean life can come back. We just have to be willing to give it time to heal."

A revitalized ocean would not only feed a growing population but could also strengthen our fight against climate change. Coastal habitats such as mangroves and salt marshes are extraordinary carbon sinks, sequestering as much CO_2 per acre as 16 acres of pristine Amazonian rain forest. New developments in offshore wind-farm technology can provide an inexhaustible supply of green energy, while mineral deposits on the seafloor, if mined sustainably, offer the raw ingredients for the batteries to store it. "It's time to stop thinking of the ocean as a victim of climate change and start thinking of it as a powerful part of the solution," says Jane Lubchenco, a marine ecologist who served as head of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) under President Barack Obama.

When the coronavirus pandemic forced the global economy into a state of suspended animation, carbon emissions slowed, shipping idled, and fisheries closed. The ocean was allowed a moment to breathe. The pause was short-lived, of course, and the economic cost potentially catastrophic. But, like the

ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX FINE FOR TIME

VIEWPOINT

We need to trust the locals

By Mark Ruffalo and Rahwa Ghirmatzion

As the COVID-19 pandemic and police-brutality protests heat up metaphorically, we can't forget that the earth is still heating up literally. Because of systemic racism, these crises are hitting communities of color especially hard. At the same time, these very communities are developing concrete, homegrown solutions. Too often, the money and decisionmaking power needed to address a crisis rest in faraway offices that deploy far-flung consultants and contractors to affected areas. It's no surprise that these responses without community leadership tend to make matters worse. When communities have resources to build on local strengths and buy-in, they come up with effective, durable and creative solutions to address short-term crises and long-term inequities.

For example: in 2018, when developers wanted to turn abandoned School 77 in Buffalo, N.Y., into luxury condos, members of the local community organization PUSH Buffalo gathered support from governments, nonprofits and businesses, and led a $14.8 million renovation that turned the former public school into 30 affordable apartments for seniors, a theater company, meeting spaces for community groups, and a gym—all powered by New York's first community-owned solar array designed specifically to serve low-income households.

When COVID-19 hit, PUSH was ready. Street teams already in place for educating neighbors about free energy-efficiency upgrades were redirected to deliver groceries and medical supplies. Existing grants supporting affordable housing were leveraged for rent relief. These solutions were deployed within days of the crisis's hitting—and weeks before Congress passed its first stimulus bill.

Black kids in the U.S. are four times as likely as white kids to die from asthma, according to the EPA, and as the climate warms, dangerous air pollution will worsen, increasing vulnerability to diseases from asthma to COVID-19. Similarly, extreme weather events—which disproportionately ravage communities of color—are projected to become more common—further exacerbating economic inequality.

PUSH is far from the only U.S. community group figuring out solutions to the twin problems of climate change and racial inequality. On the Pine Ridge reservation, the Oglala Lakota's Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation is building solar-powered affordable housing, as well as distributing food and cleaning supplies to elders during the pandemic. In Atlanta, the Partnership for Southern Equity has responded to COVID-19 by launching a Rapid Response Relief Fund. These examples show how, by working to fix long-term problems and mobilizing quickly in times of crisis, local groups are tenaciously untangling the knot of inequity and injustice. We must learn from communities of color across the nation as we all work to create the future we want.

Ruffalo is an actor and a co-founder of the Solutions Project, which supports climate-justice organizations; Ghirmatzion is executive director of PUSH Buffalo

About half the world's shallow coral reefs, like the one below in Papua New Guinea, have already vanished

once unimaginable sight of blue skies over industrial areas, it offered a reminder that change is within our grasp. "The coronavirus crisis has shown us when there is a threat to the global population, there is a willingness to act collectively to limit that threat," says Roberts. The tough lessons of COVID-19 may yet translate into a stronger understanding of the interconnectedness of our personal and planetary health—and a demand for action.

THE STAKES FOR OCEAN HEALTH have never been higher. The dying kelp and disappearing coral reefs should be sounding an urgent alarm, says Christopher Trisos, a senior researcher at the African Climate and Development Initiative at the University of Cape Town who focuses on the intersection of climate change, biodiversity and human well-being. "Biodiversity loss from climate change looks like a trickle right now, but it could become a flood very quickly," he says. Even greater "catastrophic multispecies die-offs" could begin within the decade, Trisos predicts, starting with tropical oceans and spreading to tropical forests and temperate ecosystems by the 2050s.

Coastal nations would be first and hardest hit, with devastating consequences for the billions of people who depend on these ecosystems for their livelihoods and nutrition. "We fish on coral reefs. We depend on ecotourism. We rely on healthy [kelp] forests for carbon storage and water filtration," Trisos says. "If there is a sudden collapse of these ecosystems in a single decade, we could lose these services. Income is at risk. Food security is at risk."

But there are ways of preserving the ecosystems many nations depend upon. Spanish-American marine ecologist and conservationist Enric Sala has spent the past 12 years surveying and documenting the ocean's last wilderness areas as a National Geographic explorer in residence. Through his Pristine Seas project, he has rallied governments to set aside 5.7 million sq km of coastline and ocean as marine parks where fishing, dumping, mining and other destructive industries are prohibited. The results, he says, have been astonishing. Even over a short time frame, he has watched depleted fish populations grow sixfold, kelp flourish and coral reefs bloom. Given the chance,

he says, the ocean has an extraordinary ability to regenerate. "I have seen miracles on the water. The ocean is sending us a very clear message: if you just give me some space, look what I can do."

So far, says Sala, only 2.5% of the ocean enjoys the full protection it needs to do so. He has backed a global call to set aside a third of the ocean in similarly protected areas by 2030. These marine protected areas aren't just about turning back the clock. They are a bulwark against future stresses, a kind of immunity booster for the sea that enables it to deal with threats like acidification and plastic pollution. "Not only is it necessary from a perspective of trying to undo some of the harm that we have done to the ocean over time," says Roberts, "but it's absolutely vital that we give it the resilience it needs to cope with what's coming down the pike."

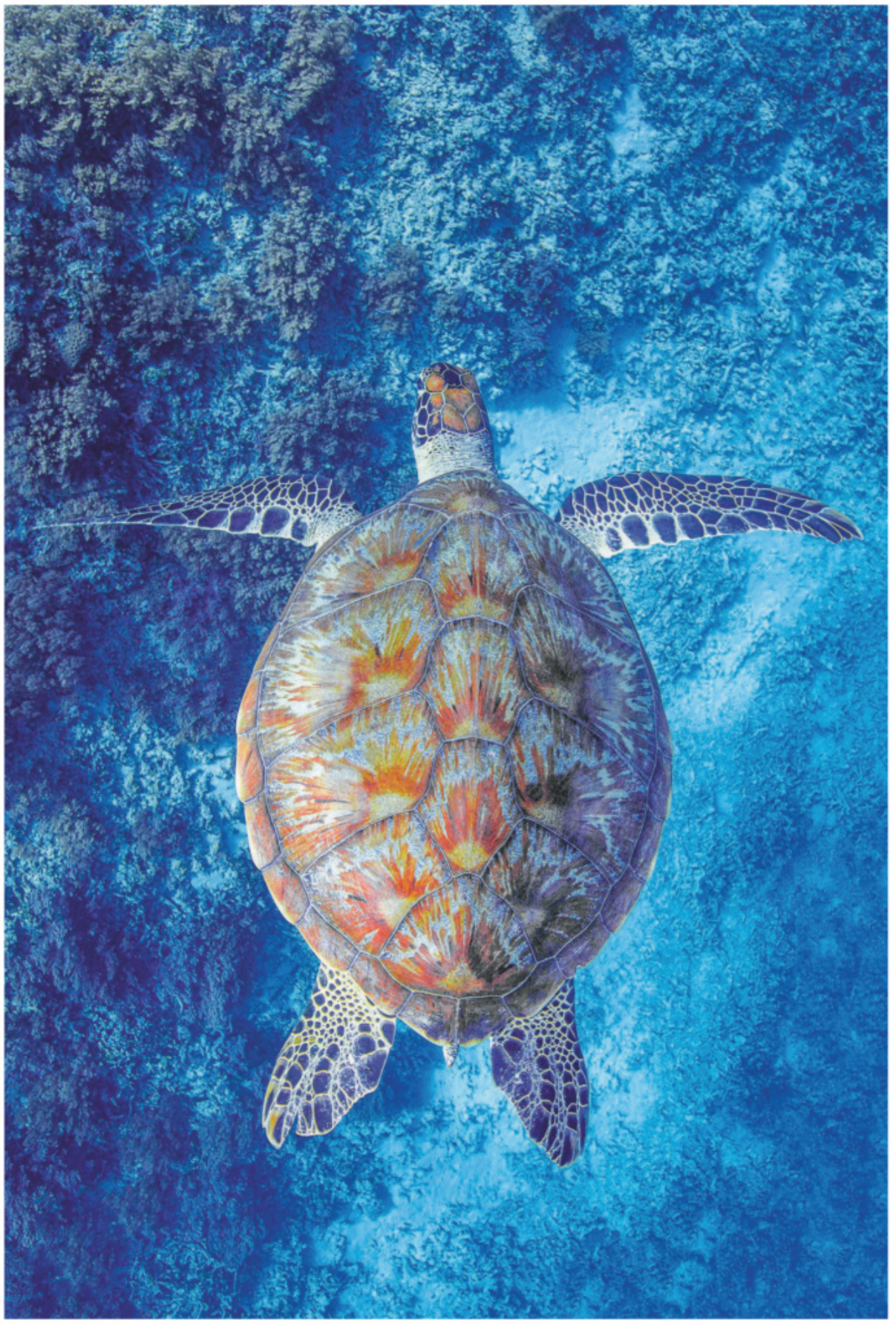
Not many fishermen, or fishing nations for that matter, are likely to embrace the idea of fencing off a third of the world's oceans. But the industry is on the brink of fishing itself out of business. The U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization, which monitors the state of global fish stocks, rates 33% of species as overfished, and an additional 60% as fished to their full potential. Yet the FAO also estimates that a growing global human population, slated to hit 10 billion by 2050, will require 70% more food than the planet can currently provide. The ocean can help make up the shortfall, if fish stocks are managed better now, says Lubchenco, the former head of NOAA, who is now a professor of marine biology at Oregon State University. Counterintuitively, that means the more fish in protected areas, the better off we will be in the long run.

For those who fish, says Sala, marine protected areas act a little like a savings account where fish can be set aside to grow and reproduce like compound interest. "The larger your principal, the larger the returns. The more fish in the reserve, the greater the reproductive output. And the only way to get the large principal is to have fully protected areas." When that bounty spills out of the sanctuaries, which it often does, the fish are fair game for industry. It's like living on interest.

The fishing industry, at least in some areas, is starting to come around. "Given the speed at which marine species and habitats are declining, there's a growing consensus that this requires an urgent and a globally coordinated response in improved ocean management," says Runa Haug Khoury, director for sustainability at Norway's Aker BioMarine, the largest krill-fishing company in the world. "For responsible fishery players, marine protected areas are not an enemy, they are a helping hand."

A redfish navigates through a colony of sea pen near Raja Ampat, Indonesia

EFFECTIVELY ROPING OFF one-third of the world's oceans will require an unprecedented level of global cooperation. Many countries, including the U.S. and the U.K., have committed to expand-



A sea turtle surveys the reefs surrounding the Gili Islands in Indonesia

ing protections in their own territorial waters. But these pledges, even while being one of the biggest conservation efforts in history, cover a combined total of less than 10% of ocean areas. The higher goal can be reached only by establishing protected areas in the high seas, which are open to all nations and will require a broad consensus. Negotiations to forge a U.N. treaty for the oceans had been scheduled for March 2020 but were postponed because of the coronavirus.

Protecting areas of the high seas, which account for 60% of the oceans, won't be an easy undertaking. For proof, you need only look south to the seas surrounding Antarctica, home to some of the most rare, vulnerable and critical ecosystems in the world. Cold-water currents spiraling away from the continent push the region's nutrient-rich waters across the planet, pumping life into coastal fisheries even north of the equator.

Rising temperatures threaten this precarious environment. In January, a team of scientists with New York's Stony Brook University conducted a census of chinstrap penguins on the rocky islands and rugged shores of the Antarctic peninsula, braving pounding surf, howling winds and piles of knee-deep guano to count nesting birds by hand. These birds feed exclusively on krill, the tiny shrimplike creatures that form the backbone of the entire ocean food chain, and their condition gives a picture of the overall health of the region. They are the canaries in the Southern Ocean's coal mine, and they are starting to disappear.

The researchers found that most colonies they surveyed had declined over the past 50 years, some by half and others up to 77%. "This big of a drop means that there is something broken in the Southern Ocean," said ornithologist Noah Strycker, as he paused to watch a pair of fluffy gray chicks waddle through his survey site on Snow Island. "Climate change is potentially driving shifts in krill populations, and then that's rippling its way up the food web and affecting the penguins."

The continent of Antarctica is protected from exploitation by international agreement, but the waters around it are not. The Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), a body made up of 25 countries and the European Union, committed in 2009 to establish a network of nine large-scale marine protected areas around the continent. The one in the Ross Sea, twice the area of Texas, is the largest such region in the world.

Yet a decade later, only this and one other have been implemented. Three others, proposed by the E.U., Argentina, Chile and Australia, have been blocked by Russia and China, which are intent on expanding their regional fishing operations. "China doesn't want restriction on access to resources anywhere," says Rodolfo Werner, an Argentine conservationist who has served as an adviser

to CCAMLR's scientific committee for the past 17 years. "Setting up a [marine protected area] in Antarctica sets a precedent that could be replicated elsewhere on the high seas, and [China sees] that as a threat to [its] sovereignty."

The coronavirus pandemic has only elevated geopolitical tensions, especially between the U.S. and China. But environmental activists point to the fact that the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, which defines and protects the continent as a "natural reserve, devoted to peace and science," was signed by 12 countries including the U.S. and the Soviet Union at the height of the Cold War.

Roberts, whose paper for *Nature* calls for 30% of the world's oceans to be set aside to recover from overfishing and exploitation, believes that the pandemic might yet clarify minds. "If there's a lesson from the coronavirus crisis, it's that global problems need global solutions," he says. "Hopefully the outliers will be more open to that message in the coming years, moving toward greater international cooperation and agreement when it comes to the things that are vital to our existence here on earth."

AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT to protect the oceans would be a huge step—but it is only one tool, and an expensive one. No amount of protection can block pollution or plastic debris, or reduce temperatures. Establishing marine protected areas is like taking an aspirin for brain cancer, says Camilo Mora, a reef-ecology scientist at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. "You think it's working because the headache goes away, but the tumor is still growing. Unless we cut greenhouse-gas emissions, the threat remains."

The key to reducing emissions may also lie within the oceans, according to Lubchenco, who has been studying the impact of global warming on ocean ecology for decades. In 2009, she memorably demonstrated to the U.S. Congress the dangers of increasing ocean acidification by submerging chalk, representing the calcium carbonate component of most sea creatures' shells, into solutions of water, water mixed with vinegar, and pure vinegar. In plain water, nothing happened. In the half-and-half solution it started to break down. In vinegar, it dissolved within minutes. She is still using solutions to make a point, having recently co-authored a study that calls itself a to-do list for reducing emissions currently produced through human use of the ocean. The shipping industry can be decarbonized through the use of hybrid battery technology. If offshore wind power could be harnessed from floating platforms in the deep sea as well as from fixed turbines in shallow water, as new prototypes promise, the industry could supply the equivalent of 11 times today's global demand for electricity, according to the International Energy Agency. Wetlands, mangroves and seagrass meadows are important carbon sinks, she says, and should be protected and restored.

Most vital would be changing the human diet. If sustainable aquaculture and mariculture methods (farming seaweed for consumption by both humans and livestock) were implemented, the ocean could supply six times more food than it does today, Lubchenco says, representing two-thirds of the animal protein that the FAO estimates will be needed to feed the global population in 2050. "Because cattle in particular are so carbon intensive [the beef industry accounts for 6% of global emissions], switching from meat to sustainably farmed fish would make a significant impact."

Added all together, the paper's authors conclude, the ocean could provide as much as one-fifth of the carbon-emission reductions needed to limit global warming to 1.5°C by the end of the century. "That's just a very specific example of how the ocean has been out of sight, out of mind, and whoa, here, look, there is huge potential we hadn't been paying attention to," Lubchenco says.

But the balance between sustainable use and conservation of the oceans is delicate, and sometimes fraught with complications. Deep-sea mining in the Pacific Ocean, for example, could yield massive increases in cobalt, nickel, copper and other materials essential to meet the demand for clean-energy technologies and batteries. The U.N.'s International Seabed Authority is expected this year to codify environmental-protection codes before allocating permits for the extraction of so-called polymetallic nodules. But environmentalists and marine biologists are calling for a moratorium on permits until more research has been done on these deposits and their role in the ecosystem. The mining industry is asking them to look at the bigger picture. "There is a single deposit on the seafloor that can provide the minerals we need for a clean-energy transition, which will slow ocean acidification—the biggest negative contribution to ocean health," says Kris Van Nijen, managing director of Belgium-based Global Sea Mineral Resources, one of the companies vying for a permit. "Yes, it is an extractive industry, and yes, it is going to come with some impacts, but solutions to combat climate change will not fall from the sky. It's all about trade-offs."

DYING KELP AND DISAPPEARING CORAL REEFS SHOULD BE SOUNDING AN URGENT ALARM

The trade-offs work in both directions. If the ocean is to also become humanity's partner in combatting the twin challenges of climate change and a growing population, the era of limitless exploitation must come to an end—and soon. The ocean does not live on a human timescale. Actions taken now will take decades to bear fruit, yet if nothing is done, the repercussions will be swift. This year, the pandemic forced a pause in the negotiations that were to decide the ocean's fate. It also offers an opportunity to consider what the ocean means to us.

For far too long we have viewed the ocean, with its incomprehensible vastness, as a source of infinite bounty and too big to fail. Then, when the ocean—robbed of its fish, sickened by plastic and poisoned by pollution—started to decline, the problem seemed too big to fix. But ours is an ocean planet, and without it we won't survive. The truth may be dawning that the ocean, as Lubchenco puts it, "is too big to ignore." —*With reporting by* MADELINE ROACHE/LONDON

The accompanying photographs by Chris Leidy appear in the recently published book* The Coral Triangle *(Assouline)

Marine protected areas offer shelter to animals like this humpback whale near the eastern Solomon Islands

Q+A

Angelina Jolie interviews *Vanessa Nakate* about activism and the power of African voices

CONCERNED ABOUT HER COUNTRY'S rising temperatures, Ugandan climate activist Vanessa Nakate, 23, spent months protesting alone outside the gates of Parliament in Kampala. Her Rise Up Movement seeks to amplify voices from Africa.

The work you're doing is really teaching all of us because, as you know more than anyone, the conversation about the climate crisis has been very limited to a few voices. How did you get involved? Before my graduation, I started carrying out research to understand the challenges that people [in my community] were facing, and I was really surprised to find that climate change was actually the biggest threat facing humanity right now. I realized every part of my country, Uganda, is affected by the climate crisis: when you go to the north, the people are suffering with long dry spells; when you go to the eastern part of the country, they're suffering with landslides and floods. I decided that I had to become a voice in the climate movement and try to get justice.

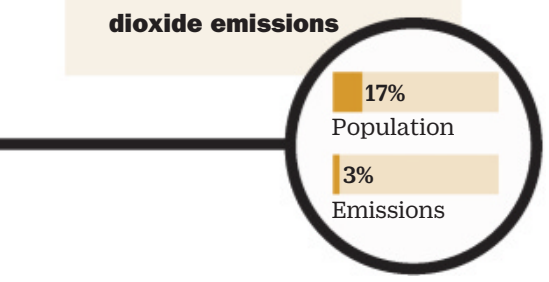
Often you hear people are going hungry because of conflict or bad governments. But it's often linked, as you point out, to climate. Some of the conflicts arise from shortages in resources. For example, Lake Chad, in Africa, has shrunk to a tenth of its size in just 50 years. The population keeps growing. So there is definitely going to be a struggle for resources. And this will disrupt the peace in the area. When you look at the root of all of this, sometimes it starts [with] climate change.

Climate activism is not easy in many places, but you're in a place where you could be arrested. You are really very courageous to do what you do. It is not easy to go out there, especially in the beginning when I was doing these strikes by myself. My family didn't really understand what I was doing. Most of my friends found it very, very weird. But later on, many of them started understanding why I was doing this. And some of them decided to get involved.

You're not only speaking out and raising awareness, but you're also looking for practical solutions, [working] with young people [and] schools. I decided to start a project that involves the installation of solar energy and institutional stoves in schools. We need a transition to renewable energy, and many of these schools are in the rural communities, and they can't afford the solar panels or stoves and all the costs that are involved in the installation. They helped to reduce the amount of firewood that these schools use in a term. For example, if a school is to use five trucks of firewood, they use two trucks of firewood with the stove, hence reducing the amount of firewood used. And it's also a learning experience for the students, teachers and parents.

I know you're passionate about the effects of [climate change] on girls. And with so many girls out of school [because of the pandemic], things are, sadly, very dangerous. I have seen it especially in this period of time that more girls got pregnant during this lockdown. And it is really heartbreaking to see how vulnerable the girl child is. It's very, very, very disturbing. Women are the ones who put food on the table. They provide all these things for their families. And yet in a disaster, they suffer the most. In my country, they never allowed girls to climb trees, mainly because it would take their dignity and values, as we were told. But then during a flood, the fastest way to survive, if you cannot swim, or if you cannot escape, is by climbing a tree until help comes. And that makes me realize that women are really affected the most in the climate crisis. We could not get climate justice without

About 17% of the world's population lives in AFRICAN NATIONS, yet they are responsible for only 3% of the world's total carbon dioxide emissions



addressing the challenges that women are facing in their daily lives.

I'm living in the U.S., and there's a lot happening with Black Lives Matter. Would [you] speak about the inequality that you see when it comes to the way these global issues are handled? This inequality, of course, starts from the kind of system that we are in. It is the system that needs to be completely shattered. Because if we continue in this kind of system, we are continuously going to see inequalities, and we are going to see the most affected people continuously being traumatized, continuously being destroyed and being left with nothing. In regards to Black Lives Matter, when I found out about that, it was very, very heartbreaking and very disturbing to think that there are actually people out there who are suffering terrible, terrible actions of racism. It is something that I experienced to some extent, but it wasn't as deep as what is happening in the States. I remember in January I happened to be cropped out of a photo with other climate activists, and to me that was a form of racism, and it felt like I had been robbed of my space. And I wasn't the first. This is continuously

In January, the AP cropped Nakate out of a photo of young climate activists; below, in Davos

going to happen unless you put an end to a system that promotes white saviorism. If we don't address the issue of racial justice, we won't be able to get climate justice. So every climate activist should be advocating for racial justice because if your climate justice does not involve the most affected communities, then it is not justice at all.

Are there ways we need to change our education systems or ways we can further educate people about Africa? I think what people really need to first understand is that Africa is not just a country. It's actually a continent with 54 countries. I remember the history that we learnt about [in school], and it talked so much of slavery and all that. I think that that is a narrative that needs to change. We don't need to learn about all that cruelty that our people went through, because to me it completely lowers your value as a person. I think African children or any other children should be told about the power that lies within Africa. The African continent is not just about the history of slavery. It's about the young people who grew up and became doctors, who became professionals in their own careers. The other thing they need to know: that when an African voice speaks, then it's really an important matter, because for a very long time, we have [had so] few voices coming out of the African continent that are amplified. But [so many others] never get a chance for their stories to be heard. I personally believe that every person who demands justice or advocates for change in their community, they have a story to tell. And I believe that their story has a solution to give. People need to understand that the African people have solutions that will change the world. —*This interview has been condensed and edited for clarity* ◻

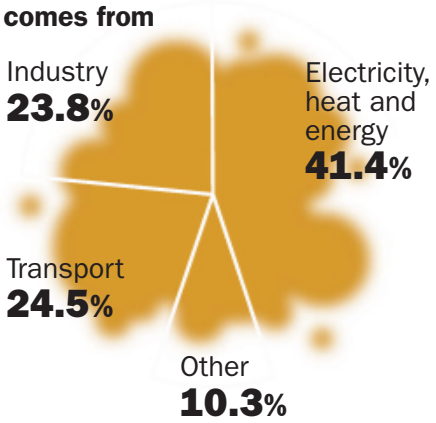
NAKATE: ISAAC KASAMANI—AFP/GETTY IMAGES; DAVOS: MARKUS SCHREIBER—AP

CLIMATE

HOW WE GOT HERE

Carbon emissions have plummeted during the pandemic because of drops in traffic, power usage and industrial production. Historically, however, brief dips have had little lasting effect on climate change

Where fossil-fuel CO_2 comes from



1918 FLU

-15%

1917–19

The influenza pandemic hit certain sectors, like transportation and coal mining, particularly hard

GREAT DEPRESSION

-26%

1929–32

In the three years following the stock-market crash, industrial production in the U.S. fell by half

POST–WW II

-17%

1943–45

Wartime spending dried up as nations pivoted to peacetime economics; factories making bombs shifted to cars and toasters

USSR COLLAPSE

-3%

1991–92

Fossil-fuel production collapsed in the Soviet Union following its dissolution in 1991

GREAT RECESSION

-1%

2008–09

The financial crisis resulted in huge CO_2 drops among developed countries, offset by an increase from China

OIL CRISIS

-4%

1979–82

The second oil crisis in five years triggered a global price shock; the U.S. was also in the midst of a recession

COVID-19

-7%

2019–20

The pandemic might cause emissions to drop to levels last seen a decade ago; still, those levels are 11 times higher than in 1900

WHAT WE NEED TO DO

-50%

2020–30

To keep global temperatures from rising 1.5°C above preindustrial levels, the world must cut emissions in half by 2030; to do so, countries must move to cleaner energy or else emissions will spike again when life returns to normal after the coronavirus

Billion metric tons of CO_2 per year

Global

U.S.

U.S. SHARE
Emissions are trending down, but not enough to reach international climate goals

35 BT CO_2

30

25

20

15

10

5

0

1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000 2010 2020 2030

+0.1°C TEMPERATURE CHANGE COMPARED WITH 1850–1900 AVERAGE

+0.3°C

+0.5°C

+1.1°C

SOURCES: GLOBAL CARBON PROJECT; ICOS; CICERO CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE RESEARCH; IEA; WMO; U.K. MET OFFICE

NOTE: INDICATED DROPS ARE PEAK YEAR TO TROUGH YEAR

TIME GRAPHIC BY EMILY BARONE AND LON TWEETEN

VIEWPOINT

The climate fight cannot be partisan

By Sebastian Kurz

The COVID-19 crisis has been a reminder to all of us that when it comes to getting things done, pragmatism trumps ideology. Yet the public debate around climate change is often polarizing and oversimplified. We are frequently told that we face a choice between saving the economy and the environment. This is false. We can tackle climate change, transform our economies and at the same time be better off than before—in Austria, in Europe and all over the world. The required response, however, must come from the political center and not the fringes.

If we are to use this moment as an opportunity to rebuild and perhaps rethink our societies, our political leaders must together develop a narrative for a green transformation that counters the radical solutions presented by populists. We cannot afford the denial and skepticism of the far right, as it might soon be too late to prevent irrevocable harm to our climate. Equally, we should beware proposals from the far left, which, instead of fixing our system, often advocate breaking it in favor of a socialist centralized state in green disguise. We must be very clear: collectivist ideas of centralization, prohibition and paternalism have failed always. No matter where they came from ideologically, they caused social injustice, economic misery and much worse. They will not suddenly help us now.

IF WE WANT to effectively fight climate change and at the same time stay on the path of economic progress, we should build on the best model human history has seen: liberal democracy, based on a free-market economy and the rule of law. As with any societal model, we need to continuously improve it. Most of us would probably agree that economic growth is always a means to an end, never an end in itself. The end really is well-being—prosperity, health and quality of life. So, naturally, we must not let our drive for economic progress damage our well-being along the way, as we have in the past with carbon emissions and other forms of pollution.

We will not make progress by suddenly trying to change what we are doing today. We will still produce, trade and consume goods globally, and use electricity, heating and transportation individually in the foreseeable future. Instead, the key will be changing how we do things going forward—sourcing from renewable energy, building with biodegradable materials, powering our travels with synthetic fuels, reducing CO_2 levels through carbon capture and other promising technologies.

The key to all of this will be innovation. And there is no better breeding ground for innovation than a free and open system that enables entrepreneurs, employees, scientists, and civil society to generate new ideas and reap their benefits. Governments need to ensure this system is embedded in a regulatory environment that incentivizes the rapid reduction in CO_2 emissions and other harmful effects of consumption.

Europe can and should play a leading role in developing and exporting these innovations and thus be the driving force behind the global transition toward a green economy. We have the economic strength to bring forth global market leaders and a regulatory environment that can enforce change. On the Continent, there is broad consensus that climate change needs to be tackled now. The European leadership's Green Deal, which offers a road map to a low-carbon economy, is an ambitious first step worth building on.

In Austria, my party's coalition government with the Green Party has recently passed an investment package of more than €6 billion ($6.8 billion), of which a significant proportion goes into renewable energy, railway expansion, forestation and incentives for green investments. We have committed to carbon neutrality by 2040. Many other governments have made similar plans and pledges.

We must not let the fight against climate change become a partisan issue. The stakes are simply too high. In the end, success will build on contributions from each and every one of us—as countries, communities and individuals. It will be the day-to-day decisions in our politics, workplaces and personal lives that will bring lasting change. The younger generation is rightly pushing for this change to come today rather than tomorrow. We must ensure that our liberal order is ready to deliver it.

Kurz is the Chancellor of Austria

ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX FINE FOR TIME

A REVOLUTION'S EVOLUTION

One of the world's most influential climate activist groups tries to find a new path forward after losing its way

BY CIARA NUGENT

In the past decade, the SHARE OF U.S. ADULTS who say climate change is a threat has increased far more among Democrats
DEM.
61%
88%
25%
GOP
31%

Extinction Rebellion members disrupt London Fashion Week in the U.K. capital on Feb. 2

PHOTOGRAPH BY CRISPIN HUGHES

THE HONEYMOON FOR EXTINCTION Rebellion, the hugely influential climate activist group, ended on Oct. 17, 2019.

From its launch, a year earlier, until that day, it seemed like the group might have cracked the formula for saving the planet: its strategy of shutting down city centers with disruptive, nonviolent civil disobedience had drawn ordinary people onto the streets to demand action on the climate crisis. It had also made the group, now present in 75 countries, the most radical of a wave of climate activist groups sweeping the world in recent years, including the youth-focused Sunrise Movement in the U.S. and the school strikers led by Greta Thunberg.

In the U.K., Extinction Rebellion (or XR) is a household name, able to generate enough pressure to reach milestones that traditional environmental campaigners spent decades chasing: within weeks of XR's first two-week mass mobilization in London in April 2019, the U.K. government declared a climate emergency and announced a legally binding target for net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Christiana Figueres, the former U.N. climate chief, compares XR's potential impact to that of groups like the suffragists and the civil rights movement. "When you're talking about a large systemic transformation, history shows us that civil disobedience is a very important component," she says.

But on Oct. 17, as XR began a second two-week mass mobilization in London, one local branch staged an action in Canning Town, a predominantly Black and Asian working-class neighborhood, in which several XR members clambered onto a subway car, preventing the train from leaving. Commuters dragged the protesters down onto the platform and beat them. Video of the incident prompted a massive backlash. "Upsetting the general public travelling to work in an environmentally sound way is plain stupid," tweeted David Lammy, a prominent Black lawmaker for the left-wing Labour Party.

Daze Aghaji, 20, a member of XR and a student in London, shudders remembering the feeling of dread when she heard about the action. "It was like, 'Wait, are we the bad guys?'" she says a few months later. "It felt like a callout from the public saying, 'We support your efforts. But this is just not the way.'"

The moment distilled three problems bubbling under XR's surface: First, as a predominantly white movement, founded in a small, wealthy town in England, XR has faced persistent criticism for its failure to include people of color and working-class communities in its activism. Second, the group is fiercely resistant to hierarchy, and has no formal leader and no effective way of vetoing actions, even when they cause internal divisions. And third, its strategy of disrupting the public walks a fine line between pressuring the government to act and becoming villains easily dismissed by the British media.

Falling donations and stagnant membership over the six months after Canning Town forced reflection and a rethink of core parts of XR's operations. But just as XR announced a new strategy for 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Nationwide quarantine measures disrupted public life more than any XR action ever could, and prompted the group to temporarily suspend its central tactic of mass mobilization. The health crisis has also shifted the climate crisis down the agenda for governments, the media and the public.

Scrambling to learn from its mistakes and avoid losing hard-won momentum, XR is now planning a large-scale action for September. If the group gets its next steps right, it could offer a blueprint for activists around the world. If it flounders, XR could join the chorus of ignored voices shouting as the climate breaks down.

SINCE JANUARY, XR has made its headquarters in a hollowed-out apartment building in a trendy area of East London.

'IT WAS LIKE, "WAIT, ARE WE THE BAD GUYS?"'

—DAZE AGHAJI,
Extinction Rebellion member

PREVIOUS PAGES: PANOS PICTURES/REDUX; THESE PAGES: RODGER BOSCH—AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

On a sunny afternoon earlier this year, Gail Bradbrook, 48, sat at the kitchen table of a startup-like office on the first floor, surrounded by fellow activists busily typing on laptops. She acknowledged that the movement she co-founded has had a bumpy ride as it amassed more than 200,000 members worldwide in less than two years. "It feels like 15 of us started off pedaling on this bike, and then we realized we needed a train, so we keep sticking bits on while we're pedaling," she said.

It was in Bradbrook's home in Stroud, southwest England, that XR began on a spring weekend in 2018. Fifteen environmental activists gathered to discuss ways to overcome the inertia on carbon emissions despite decades of warnings by scientists and pressure from NGOs. Drawing on the work of Harvard social scientist Erica Chenoweth, they decided they needed numbers. Chenoweth's 2011 study of nonviolent civil-disobedience

Young XR activists demonstrate outside South Africa's Parliament in Cape Town on June 1

movements that aim to overthrow authoritarian governments concluded that those that engage at least 3.5% of the population always succeed. XR's critics point out that demanding drastic action on emissions in a democracy does not exactly map onto Chenoweth's scenario. But the group's founders believe that if they can get 3.5% of a country's population to participate in the "rebellion"—either attending actions or assisting behind the scenes—and combine that with a small core of a few thousand people willing to be arrested, as well as the passive support of 50% of the population, they can force governments into a position where taking climate action is less painful than XR's disruption.

Bradbrook and her fellow founders envisaged a decentralized structure for XR. That has proved to be both its driving force and its Achilles' heel. There's a national U.K. actions team, made up of about a dozen people, that plans mass mobilizations, and a finance team that responds to funding applications from local groups. But there are some 400 of these local groups, all of which lead their own actions, with no single body in charge of sign-off. Internationally, more than 1,100 groups across 75 countries are working in a similarly loose structure.

That grassroots strategy drew in people who had never previously gotten involved in activism. Among them are grandmothers like Hazel Mason, 71, who had "never been a rebel" but went from trying to recycle more to taking to the streets. "I thought, Why am I hoping 'they' do something? Why don't I do something?" she says. It also resonated with parents like Andrew Medhurst, 54, who told his colleagues at a pension fund that he "couldn't ignore the crisis anymore" and quit in 2018 to start voluntarily coordinating XR's finances, gettingarrested three times during actions. In April 2019, thousands of XR rebels shut down central London, dominating the British media's attention for two weeks. Millions of dollars in donations rolled in from philanthropists, celebrities and crowdfunders. While school strikers were raising global momentum around the climate crisis, XR seemed on the verge of a revolution in the U.K.

"What [XR] achieved, in a short space of time with few resources, was pretty outstanding," says veteran activist Kumi Naidoo. After participating in civil-disobedience actions challenging apartheid in South Africa as a teenager in the 1980s, Naidoo served as director of Greenpeace from 2009 to 2015, and then as secretary-general of Amnesty International, before stepping down in December 2019 for health reasons. He says there's "no question" that XR contributed to a shift in public consciousness on climate change, reflected in opinion polls that are "unrecognizable" from his time at Greenpeace. Naidoo sees XR's more disruptive disobedience as "one of the only really strong, convincing parental voices" answering youth activists' appeal for adults to act.

The nonhierarchical structure seems, in theory, to be democratizing and in line with XR's belief in equality. But in practice, it has meant there was no one to blame for decisions that many felt were insensitive to Black people and other people of color. The Canning Town stunt was highly controversial within XR when its planners began sharing details days ahead of it. A statement released by its U.K. team hours after the action read: "Very few people in XR wanted this to happen, but the 'postconsensus' organizational model which we currently employ is such that it happened all the same."

That did little to dampen the anger of critics. "From the get-go, they were asked by environmental justice campaigners in London to consult with communities about how to not alienate people," climate-justice campaigner Suzanne Dhaliwal wrote in a London newspaper after the Canning Town incident. "[XR] is not taking heed of the call to look at its class and privilege blind spots."

These blind spots are particularly

XR protesters dressed as dead polar bears in Westminster, London, on Feb. 17

A die-in protest under the blue-whale skeleton at the Natural History Museum in London on April 22

FROM LEFT: JEREMY SELWYN—EVENING STANDARD/REDUX; STEVE BELL—CAMERA PRESS/REDUX; EXTINCTION REBELLION

apparent in the movement's interactions with British police forces, which have a history of discrimination against Black communities. In July 2019, many heard a dog-whistle message in XR's call on Twitter for police in London to "concentrate on issues such as knife crime, and not nonviolent protesters who are trying to save our planet." In October, one XR member delivered flowers and a note thanking officers for their "decency and professionalism" to the Brixton police station in London. It was the same police station where, during the 1990s and 2000s, three Black men had died in police custody, sparking large local protests at the time. Kevin Blowe, coordinator for the Network for Police Monitoring, a watchdog group, wrote that the incident displayed a total lack of "empathy for communities who experience racist policing" and "outright, blatant racism [in] choosing to not 'see' race."

Critics also point to the visible dominance of white people at XR's actions, even in ethnically diverse cities like London, and to the core importance of confrontations with police and arrests in XR's strategy. Aghaji, who is Black and has led youth-outreach efforts for XR, says the initial "focus on the arrests" in media coverage put off young people of color from joining the movement. "Arrestability does lie in privilege, and not everyone needs to get arrested," she says. "I never really identified as arrestable."

XR's international chapters have also been criticized for centering white perspectives. In Canada, members of the Scia'new First Nation accused XR of entering their lands without permission while protesting a gas pipeline in February of this year. Some members splintered off from XR U.S. in opposition to language on its platform calling for "reparations and remediation led by and for Black people, Indigenous people, people of color and poor communities for years of environmental injustice." (The rival faction, dubbed XR America, stripped out the specific language on race and class.)

'WE CAN'T JUST BE PISSING PEOPLE OFF. WE NEED TO TARGET THE PEOPLE WITH POWER.'

—**JACKIE SCOLLEN**, activist

In the U.K., XR's decentralized structure has led to incidents that alienated the wider public and contributed to a narrative of its activists as careless. In September 2019, a group of XR activists, including co-founder Roger Hallam, attempted to use drones to block flights taking off from Heathrow, the U.K.'s largest airport, to protest air-travel expansion. Though XR had released a pre-emptive statement saying the group had collectively decided not to back such an action, it still hurt the movement's image, says Jackie Scollen, a member of XR from a working-class area of County Durham, in northern England. "When my friends heard about that, they said, 'You can't do that.' People work and save all year long to go on two weeks' holiday to Spain or somewhere."

XR activists interviewed by TIME say such unpopular actions contributed to a leveling off in sign-ups and donations

XR activists climb onto a train at London's Canning Town station, prompting a standoff with commuters, on Oct. 17

in late 2019 and early 2020. XR is burning through its savings. From November to January, XR U.K.'s income averaged around $120,000 a month, while it spent close to $240,000.

Aghaji believes XR will have to learn to weather these unpredictable controversies. Imposing a top-down structure, she argues, would undermine the reason that XR has been successful in the first place. "It's people taking power into their hands, saying the social contract is broken and rebelling in a way that's true to them. I think that's beautiful."

ON A SATURDAY in February, before the pandemic put an end to in-person meetings, a dozen people sat in mismatched chairs in the half-painted lobby of XR headquarters, trying to learn from the group's rocky ride. During an all-day "DNA training," designed to teach new members the movement's core values, a session leader taught attendees how "to tell XR's story" to get others involved. Tips included holding meetings in "inclusive spaces" that didn't feel exclusive to white people and asking people about their personal experiences with the environment. There were things to avoid: using phrases that implied overpopulation was a problem; focusing on individual lifestyle changes rather than systemic change; and using "lefty language" (no examples were given). Almost every point set off a fierce debate among attendees. Rolled out at the start of the year, the workshop was an effort to learn from XR's missteps and unify a movement that has sometimes struggled to agree on its message to the world.

Aghaji says the movement has been through an ongoing learning process on both race and class since Canning Town. "It was a turning point for us. The perspectives of marginalized groups are now at the forefront rather than just an addition." One result has been an effort to emphasize that you don't need to get arrested to take part in actions, Aghaji says. In January, XR started a team looking at how race and class oppression intersects with the climate crisis and why members of some groups were less likely to join XR. The movement has also intensified its focus in messaging on climate justice—the idea that since climate change is hitting harder and earlier in communities in the Global South, responses must be geared toward addressing systemic inequalities.

Antiracism protests that have spread around the world after George Floyd, an unarmed Black man, was killed by police on May 25 in Minneapolis, have put further pressure on XR to address its failings on race. "We have made mistakes, and we're now taking the time to listen, educate ourselves further and work out a plan for taking responsibility for these mistakes properly," Alanna Byrne, a London-based member of XR's media team, said in early June. "Racism is a key factor in the causes and continuation of the climate and ecological emergency, and tackling it needs to run through all aspects of our work." The XR Internationalist Solidarity Network, a group formed in early 2019 and led by Black XR members from the Global South, would have a "much more" central role going forward, Byrne added.

XR organizers say they are more broadly shifting strategy toward a model that prioritizes the communities in which they operate. Co-founder Bradbrook says XR will ramp up outreach to local

Co-founder Gail Bradbrook speaks to activists blocking a road in Central London on Oct. 9

residents, getting members to knock on doors and talk with people one-on-one about how XR should organize locally, to avoid clashes. More surprisingly, the group will also move away from its focus on disrupting the public, which won it so much attention. Bradbrook says repeating the same tactic won't sustain media interest. "We've made our point to the public. The public, frankly, are not the problem."

Instead, XR will direct its actions at institutions, businesses and government bodies preventing climate action. "We can't just be pissing people off," agrees Scollen, the member from Durham. "We need to target the people with power."

In late February, Scollen helped lead one of XR's last major actions before the U.K. entered a lockdown, as 300 activists dressed as canaries blocked the entrance of an open-pit coal mine near Durham to protest its expansion. The action exemplified the new strategy, disrupting the mine owners, not the local area.

But not everyone is happy. Joel Scott-Halkes, 27, traveled up from London for the mine action. He describes a "mini civil war" inside XR over the decision to shift away from public disruption. A member of the U.K. actions circle, he spent two months working on the 2020 strategy. He argues that public disruption is what got the movement to where it is today, and that outweighs the risk of upsetting people. "The disruption is minimal and tiny compared to the disruption that's going to come as the planet breaks down," Scott-Halkes says.

In his view, the movement's most powerful tactic is mass mobilization. When security forces can't contain the protests, the argument goes, it will be easier for the government to take drastic action to cut emissions—what XR has been pushing for—than to do nothing and allow protests to continue. XR claims it came close to overwhelming authorities in October. London's police force had to draft officers from elsewhere, and even resorted to issuing a ban on XR protests—a move England's high court later ruled unlawful. "If we had even 3,000 or 4,000 more people, we would have done it," Scott-Halkes says. "We would have broken something in history."

EVENTS IN 2020 have made that strategy much harder to execute. It was meant to be a landmark year for climate action. The U.K. was due to host this year's U.N. climate conference in November, where international negotiators would gather to scale up emissions targets, five years after the Paris Agreement was signed. To ramp up pressure on lawmakers, XR had planned mass mobilizations for May and November.

But in May, the British government said it would postpone the summit by a full year because of the pandemic. Largely stuck at home since late March, XR activists have used their daily lockdown-sanctioned exercise periods to post posters or graffiti at oil companies and banks that invest in fossil fuels, urging the government not to give them bailout packages. In late June, a group of XR activists led a 125-mile march from Birmingham to London to protest ecological disruption by a planned high-speed rail link.

Fundraising has also gotten harder. Since March, XR's monthly income has fallen to around $60,000, Medhurst, the finance coordinator, says. In mid-April, the group suspended payments to 150

GEORGE CRACKNELL WRIGHT—LNP/SHUTTERSTOCK; ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX FINE FOR TIME

activists who had been receiving small grants for living expenses. A recent $300,000 donation will help, but the pot is far smaller than in October 2019, when XR spent close to $1.2 million.

COVID-19 has also threatened to sap the momentum of the climate movement as a whole. Some fear that in the rush to revive failing economies, countries will abandon their climate goals. Indigo Rumbelow, a 25-year-old member of the U.K. actions circle, says the pandemic has filled XR "with both hope and fear." Governments could opt to prop up the fossil-fuel industry, she says. "But there's also a sense that we can rebuild something new and create a more just society."

To get there, though, effective organizing will be crucial. Naidoo says XR must "continue to do substantially better" on understanding race and class. For him, the convergence of COVID-19, the climate crisis and high-profile incidents of police brutality may create a "boiling point" for anger over inequality, making collaboration between environmentalism and other social movements essential. "It is critical that we have an approach that celebrates a million flowers blooming for the fights of justice," he says.

XR appears to have embraced that philosophy. On July 3, it announced that it would stage its next large-scale action, starting Sept. 1. While following social-distancing guidelines, activists around the country will target institutions and businesses they accuse of blocking emission reductions, and "peacefully blockade" Parliament in London as it returns from a summer break. "There is growing frustration at government inaction, not just on climate but on our health, well-being, on racial injustice, inequality and more," Byrne says. "It's time to express that and come out on the streets again."

Scollen, the organizer from the northeast, says XR's future will be defined by its ability to make people from all parts of society feel empowered. "Most people, unless they're highly educated and privileged, don't feel like they can change anything," she says. "But look around: it has started. People will see that you can be a part of this. You can do this." —*With reporting by* MADELINE ROACHE/LONDON

VIEWPOINT

No 'green deal' will be ambitious enough to save the planet

By Greta Thunberg

In the aftermath of the coronavirus crisis, there are many who will claim that we need to use this as an opportunity. They'll say that when we restart the economy, we must adopt a so-called green recovery plan. And of course it's incredibly important that we invest our assets in sustainable projects, renewable energy, technical solutions and research. But we must not for one second believe that it will be even close to what is actually required, or that the so-called targets set out today would be ambitious enough.

If all countries were to actually go through with the emission reductions they have set as goals, we would still be heading for a catastrophic global temperature rise of at least 3°C above preindustrial levels. The world's planned fossil-fuel production alone by the year 2030 accounts for 120% more than what would be consistent with a target of 1.5°C temperature rise. The math just doesn't add up.

If we are to avoid a climate catastrophe, we have to tear up contracts and abandon existing deals and agreements on a scale we can't even begin to imagine. No "green recovery plan" or "deal" in the world would alone be able to achieve such emission cuts. Even debating it risks doing more harm than good, as it sends a signal that the changes needed are possible within today's societies. As if we could somehow solve a crisis without treating it like a crisis. A lot may have happened in the past two years, but the changes and level of awareness required are still nowhere in sight.

Things may look dark and hopeless, but I'm telling you there is hope. And that hope comes from the people, from democracy, from you. From the people who are starting to realize the absurdity of the situation. Everywhere there are signs of change, of awakening. Just take the #MeToo movement, Black Lives Matter or the School Strike movement, for instance. It's all interconnected. We have passed a social tipping point. We can no longer look away from what our society ignores, whether it is equality, justice or sustainability.

From a sustainability point of view, all political and economic systems have failed. But humanity has not yet failed. The climate and ecological emergency is not primarily a political crisis. It is an existential one, based completely on science. The science is there. The numbers exist. We cannot get away from them. Nature doesn't bargain, and you cannot compromise with the laws of physics. Either we accept and understand the reality as it is, or we don't. Either we go on as a civilization, or we don't. Doing our best is no longer good enough. We must now do the seemingly impossible. And that is up to you and me. Because no one will do it for us.

Thunberg, TIME's 2019 Person of the Year, is a climate activist and co-founder of Fridays for Future. This viewpoint is adapted from an essay originally broadcast on Swedish radio

CLIMATE

JUSTICE FOR ALL

The larger climate movement is finally embracing the fight against environmental racism

BY JUSTIN WORLAND

THE 2019 FIRE AT THE PHILADELPHIA Energy Solutions refinery started with a simple failure: one leaky elbow pipe in a 1,400-acre facility covered with pipes, tanks and industrial towers. Within a few hours last June, enough gaseous propane had seeped into the air to ignite the facility into a fiery hellscape with an explosion hurling human-size pieces of industrial equipment into the air and shaking the ground miles away. Workers rapidly shut down the facility, which had for decades converted crude oil into usable products.

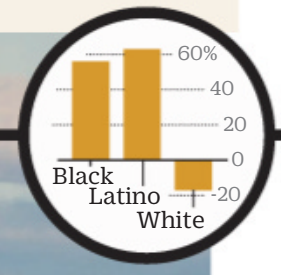
The workers escaped with only a few minor injuries, but the facility had already spent decades killing its neighbors in South Philadelphia. The refinery—the largest on the East Coast, dating back to the early days of the oil industry in the 19th century—was single-handedly responsible for more than half of the city's cancer-causing air toxics, according to a report from the city. And it contributed to the 125 premature deaths that the American Thoracic Society and New York University say result from air pollution in Philadelphia each year. The South Philadelphia area surrounding the facility, where 60% of residents are Black, has some of the highest asthma-hospitalization rates in the city, where asthma numbers top those in all but a few U.S. cities. The explosion "was kind of a wake-up call for the rest of the city," says Derek S. Green, an at-large city-council member in Philadelphia. "If you're living there every day, the pollution is something that you were constantly dealing with."

Eight months later and five miles away, a group of Black voters from across Philadelphia filed into a bland conference room of a downtown office building for a focus group on climate change organized by Third Way, a center-left Washington, D.C., policy think tank. The warming planet ranked low on the attendees' list of priorities, at least at first, but the conversation turned passionate when it came to the pollution in their own backyard.

"You come out and it's hard to breathe on most days," said one attendee. Another noted that in Southwest Philadelphia, "all the African Americans grew up with asthma." The Energy Solutions refinery drew near universal condemnation. "All y'all did was put out the fire," said another attendee, pointing to the government response. "You didn't do nothing for those thousand houses who have to breathe in this air. It's messed up."

These dynamics are nothing new. For decades, environmental-justice advocates in the U.S. have worked to bring attention to the heightened environmental risks faced by communities of color: higher levels of lead exposure, higher risks of facing catastrophic flooding, and poorer air quality, to name just a few. But progress

Latino and Black American communities are, respectively, exposed to 63% and 56%
MORE POLLUTION THAN THEY PRODUCE



The Philadelphia Energy Solutions Refining Complex after catching fire on June 21, 2019

PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT ROURKE

has been slow on the national stage as the most powerful groups fighting for environmental rules, not to mention government leaders, have largely ignored them.

Today, that conversation is changing. With partisanship at record levels and Republicans still skeptical of climate rules, environmental activists have realized they need a big coalition to pass legislation, and that means getting the enthusiastic backing of people of color. To do that, they are not only talking about the environmental hazards faced by people of color but also putting their concerns at the core of their campaigns.

"Silo activism is exactly what the extremists want," the minister and activist William J. Barber II told me ahead of a speech at a climate event last year. "Historically, the only way we've had great transformation in this country is when there's been fusion of all coalitions."

COVID-19, which is killing Black Americans at twice the rate of their white counterparts in large part because of environmental issues like pollution-caused asthma and heart disease, has only advanced the urgency for climate backers.

And so as the U.S. approaches an election and, potentially, a once-in-a-decade opportunity to pass climate legislation, finding a way to address centuries of systemic environmental racism has emerged as a key concern. The stakes are high: failure means not only that people of color will continue facing disproportionate environmental hazards, but also the possible failure of efforts to reduce emissions and take humanity off a crash course with dangerous global warming.

GREEN ECONOMY FOR ALL
P.E.S. RESPONSIBLE FOR 72% OF TOXIC AIR EMISSION IN PHILLY
Divest the Globe
zero waste to landfills
WE CAN'T AFFORD CLOSED-DOOR DECISIONS.
601

A Jan. 17 protest in opposition to the reopening of the Philadelphia Energy Solutions Refining Complex

LONG BEFORE THE PHRASE *I can't breathe* became a rallying cry for Black Lives Matter activists protesting the deaths of Black people at the hands of police, environmental-justice activists warned that pollution was choking and killing people of color in the U.S.

They had good reason: study after study in the 1970s and 1980s emerged to document how minority groups—and Black people in particular—suffered disproportionately from a slew of environmental hazards, and resonated with many who saw this in their own backyards. The research was crystallized in a landmark 1987 report called "Toxic Wastes and Race." Across the country, race was the single greatest determining factor of whether an individual lived near a hazardous-waste facility, which in turn contributed to a range of ailments. Three of five landfills were in predominantly Black or Hispanic neighborhoods, the study found, affecting 60% of Americans in those groups.

Scholars explained the problem simply as environmental racism: discriminatory housing policy throughout the country forced people of color into the same neighborhoods, and racist lending practices meant land in those neighborhoods was worth less just because minorities resided there. This made the land ripe for polluting industries, which need large spaces for their facilities and were able to get local buy-in in part by arguing they created jobs. Moreover, the companies that owned and operated these facilities knew that minority groups largely lacked the political power to stop them.

With this in mind, hundreds of early environmental-justice advocates gathered in Washington, D.C., for the first People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, in 1991. Over four days, the attendees discussed their experiences with environmental racism, from widespread cancer on Native American reservations where nuclear waste was dumped to higher-than-average asthma rates in predominantly Black communities near industrial sites. Going forward, their mission would be to put these concerns at the heart of environmental policy; they drafted 17 principles to reflect that. "That first People of Color conference is where environmentalism and conservationism were redefined," says Richard Moore, co-coordinator of the Environmental Justice Health Alliance.

For a few years afterward, progress seemed to come quickly. In 1992, the 17 principles were distributed to thousands of environmental activists from around the globe who gathered in Rio de Janeiro

PREVIOUS PAGES: AP; THESE PAGES: ERIK MCGREGOR—SIPA USA; ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX FINE FOR TIME

for the U.N. Earth Summit. In subsequent international meetings, poorer nations would use the principles to argue for climate action that addressed their needs. In the U.S., President Bill Clinton signed an Executive Order in 1994 requiring agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency and Federal Emergency Management Agency to consider environmental justice in their policies.

But when it came to the domestic conversation around new laws to address climate change specifically—already emerging as the defining environmental challenge of the time—some of the national environmental groups paid the activists little attention, fearing that concerns about racial justice would distract from efforts to reduce emissions. "We were taken for granted," says longtime environmental-justice leader Beverly Wright, executive director of the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, "like a gnat that just wouldn't go away."

The philosophy—focus first on stopping greenhouse gases and worry later

VIEWPOINT

Black Lives Matter matters for the climate

By Ayana Elizabeth Johnson

The Black Lives Matter movement is not a distraction from saving the planet. We can't solve the climate crisis without people of color, but we could probably solve it without racists.

Whether it's Hurricane Katrina or air pollution, storms and exposure to toxins cause much greater harm to communities of color. (Although, yes, in the longer term, climate change is coming for us all, even if you have a bunker in New Zealand.) So it follows that if we're thinking about how to become more resilient to the impacts of climate change, we must focus on the people who are actually the most impacted. And we must understand that it is people from their own communities who are best equipped to lead them.

I simply don't see how we win at addressing the climate crisis without elevating Black, and Indigenous, and Latinx, and Asian leaders. Because it is not merely a technical challenge we are facing. It's not just about solar panels and electric cars. This is about how we implement solutions, how we replicate and scale them; it's about communities and governments and corporations changing the way they do things—solving the climate crisis is about everything. So we need to find ways that everyone can be a part of this transformation.

If climate organizations fail to prioritize welcoming people of color, the movement will never grow large enough to succeed. Furthermore, people of color are significantly more concerned about climate change than white people are (49% of whites, 57% of Blacks, 69% of Latinx). That's tens of millions of people of color in the U.S. who could be a major part of the solutions we need if unburdened by white supremacy.

The climate crisis requires that we build the biggest team possible. So wouldn't it make sense to prioritize the people who already get it?

For environmental groups, whether to consider justice is no longer a question; it is now expected. But there is an impulse to oversimplify and say climate justice is racial justice, to use an equal sign. While they are inseparably intertwined, they are also distinct, layered. In the wise words of feminist and civil rights activist Audre Lorde, "There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives."

How we address climate change will determine what the future holds for humanity. How do you deal with a crisis facing humanity without caring about the humans? Who are we saving the planet for?

Let's include ever more expansive understandings of justice in environmental work. Let's integrate an understanding of interdependence. Let's take a holistic approach inspired by ecosystems. Let's value human diversity as much as we do biodiversity. Let's think about the world we want to live in, and how we can build it, together.

Johnson is a marine biologist, founder of Urban Ocean Lab and co-editor of All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis

about how to fix the disparate socioeconomic effects—still guides many climate activists to this day, but thus far it has proved a mistake. Not only did ignoring environmental-justice concerns leave people of color behind, but the decision also alienated a bloc whose support would have helped pass climate legislation.

The George W. Bush presidency saw little progress on climate issues, but when President Barack Obama took office in 2009, national environmental groups sensed an opportunity. To capitalize on it, they partnered with some of the country's biggest corporations and lobbied for cap-and-trade, which would have set a limit on carbon-dioxide emissions and required companies to pay if they exceeded it. This was, in many ways, a smart compromise: cut emissions without alienating businesses that had the ear of the GOP.

Environmental-justice activists were furious. Not only were they left out of the discussion, but they argued that cap-and-trade would worsen the plight of people of color by allowing Big Industry to continue polluting minority communities so long as they cleaned up their act elsewhere. That argument, largely theoretical at the time, has since been backed up by research, including a 2016 study by researchers from four California universities that showed the state's cap-and-trade program reduced the greenhouse-gas emissions that cause climate change but did nothing to alleviate the toxic pollution facing communities of color.

With those concerns in mind, the environmental-justice activists, along with many other progressives, actively fought against a federal cap-and-trade system. "We were brought in after they made their decisions," says Wright. "Whatever decision they made, we were throwing bricks at the window."

The legislation passed the House in 2009 by only seven votes, and the grand coalition supporting cap-and-trade fell apart before it could be brought to the Senate floor. Sensing the lack of a mandate for the policy, many of the corporate leaders who had supported cap-and-trade reversed their position. They had come to the table in hopes of a compromise, but they were just as happy to let the legislation fail and avoid new rules altogether.

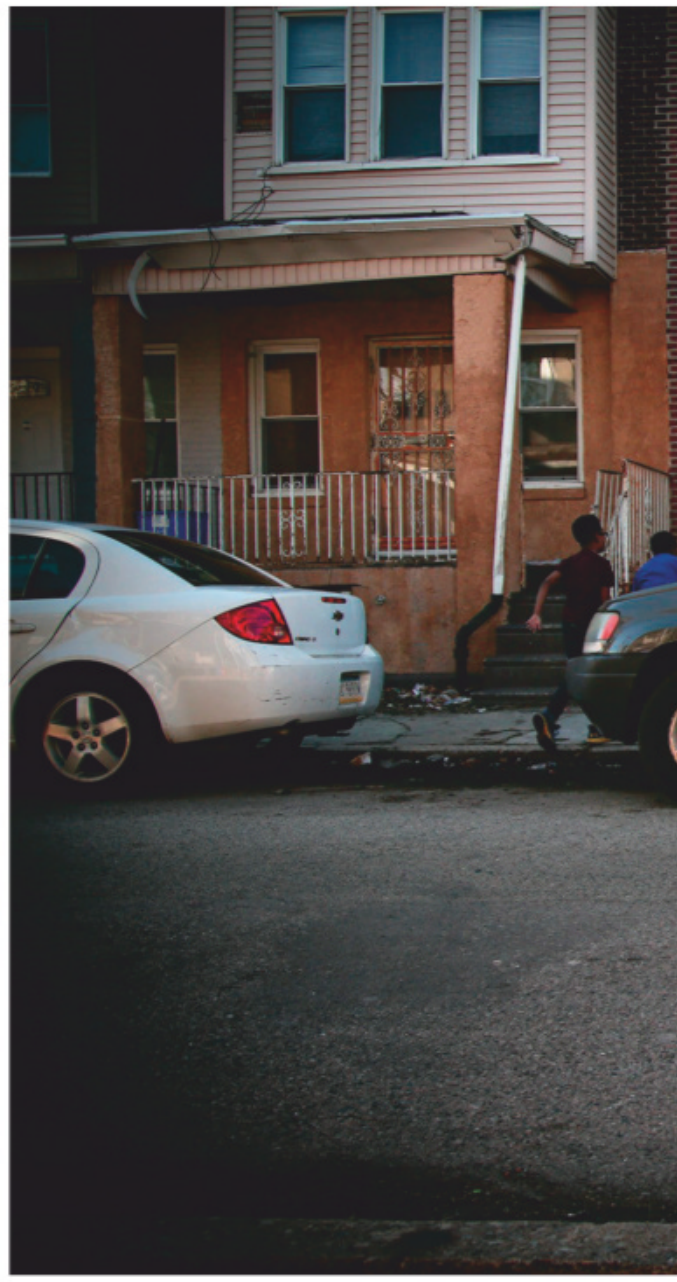
The lack of support from environmental-justice activists didn't doom cap-and-trade on its own, but a slew of analyses of why the bill foundered cited a failure to earn grassroots support. And there was a clear missed opportunity: both groups shared a common rival in the fossil-fuel industry, which is responsible for both greenhouse-gas emissions and air pollution and uses its deep pockets to fight regulation.

Since then, significant opportunities to advance the climate cause in the U.S. have been few and far between. Obama enacted a range of rules to slow emissions and cut pollution, most notably the Clean Power Plan, which targeted coal. But even members of his Administration have said the initiatives fell short.

Climate activists hope they will have another chance to pass bold legislation to reduce emissions if former Vice President Joe Biden wins the presidential election in November. With the 2009 failure in mind, environmental groups have sought to build grassroots support. That effort includes partnering with youth activists like the Sunrise Movement, which advocates for a Green New Deal. These groups have been widely credited with changing the climate conversation and helping the public understand the connections of climate to everyday life, but the environmental-justice activists have played a significant role too. National groups that once avoided talking about race have adopted the language of environmental-justice activists, pointing out that climate change will hit the most vulnerable the hardest and talking about the other social benefits of stemming emissions. "Centering reducing toxic pollution in frontline communities is both the right thing to do, and it's also essential to building the power that we need to have the overwhelming support we need to overpower the fossil-fuel industry," says Sara Chieffo, vice president of government affairs at the League of Conservation Voters.

'WE WERE TAKEN FOR GRANTED, LIKE A GNAT THAT JUST WOULDN'T GO AWAY.'

—BEVERLY WRIGHT



The new alliance may be young, but it has quickly become deep and wide. Most important, national environmental groups, Democratic political organizations and members of Congress alike have allowed environmental-justice leaders to take the reins in crafting policies to address environmental racism. Last summer, after months of consultation, a group of leading environmental-justice activists announced a coalition under the banner of an Equitable and Just Climate Platform. The platform committed groups like the Center for American Progress, a mainstay of the Democratic political establishment, along with environmental groups like the League of Conservation Voters and the Natural Resources Defense Council to combatting "systemic inequalities" alongside climate change. "We need to address greenhouse-gas emissions," says Cecilia Martinez, a professor at the University of Delaware's Center for Energy and Environmental Policy, who helped lead the effort. "But we cannot do that divorced and disconnected from the other types of

LISA RIORDAN SEVILLE

Children in one of the communities next door to the Philadelphia Energy Solutions Refining Complex, on Jan. 12

legacy pollution that have been harming our communities."

On the campaign trail, Biden has spoken about racial disparities as a top concern for climate policy and appointed longtime environmental-justice leaders like Martinez to help. He framed the climate plank of his platform during the primary campaign, a $1.7 trillion spending proposal, as a plan for a "clean-energy revolution and environmental justice."

On Capitol Hill, Democrats say they are now privileging the solutions proposed by communities affected by environmental racism. Representative Donald McEachin, a Virginia Democrat, described his proposed Environmental Justice for All Act as a collection of solutions—from amending the Civil Rights Act to allow people who face disproportionate pollution to sue, to requiring federal employees to receive environmental-justice training—suggested by those affected by environmental injustice. "This is a unique bill in that I didn't have any part in authorship," he says of the legislation.

Democratic leadership is taking note too. In late June, the House Committee on the Climate Crisis, formed in early 2019 by Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, released a 500-plus-page report outlining a path forward on climate change. The opening of the report references the police killing of George Floyd, and the document incorporates a slew of policies to address environmental racism from the Environmental Justice for All Act.

Speaking on Capitol Hill in June, Pelosi cited the work of environmental-justice leaders among others in a coalition needed to pass legislation. "They have transformed the conversation," she said. "We cannot succeed without the outside mobilization that they bring."

ON THE SURFACE, the environment and climate change may look like minor concerns in the scheme of issues facing Black Americans and other people of color today, especially when you take a cursory glance at the past five months. The COVID-19 pandemic has hit African Americans especially hard, killing them at twice the rate of their white counterparts. The economic challenges have hurt too, leaving the unemployment rate substantially higher for Latinx, Asian and Black Americans than for their white counterparts. And the highly publicized killings of African Americans like Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade and others have jolted the country into recognizing the systematic mistreatment of Black Americans by law enforcement.

And yet environmental racism is at the center of this moment: COVID-19 has hit Black people hard in large part because environmental hazards like air pollution lead to conditions like asthma and heart disease, which in turn make a person more likely to suffer the worst of the virus. To address systemic racism, the country needs to address environmental racism, and vice versa. "The system that created inequality in terms of pollution choking our neighborhoods is the same system that's choking Black people and brown people when it comes to policing," says Robert Bullard, a scholar of urban planning and environmental policy whose work earned him the moniker "the father of environmental justice."

Climate change is only going to make the challenges for people of color worse. Just look at how Hurricane Katrina, a taste of superstorms to come, displaced New Orleans' Black community; how Latinx agricultural workers are more likely to suffer in the stifling heat of farms; or how urban communities can be 22°F warmer than nearby areas that are less developed. Research has even linked higher temperatures to increased crime and police brutality. These realities may explain why surveys have shown people of color to be more concerned about climate change than their white counterparts.

This understanding has come slowly, but the increased attention to systemic racism and the urgency of climate change has made for a unique opportunity: address centuries of racism while saving the world from a global warming catastrophe. Indeed, tackling the two together may be a political necessity. *—With reporting by* MARIAH ESPADA, MADELINE ROACHE *and* JOSH ROSENBERG ◻

BUSINESS

Can Big Agriculture ever go green?

By Emily Barone

ON APRIL 12, A MEAT-PROCESSING plant in Sioux Falls, S.D., owned by Smithfield Foods shut down after hundreds of employees contracted coronavirus. The closure was hardly unique. Food-processing plants are tinderboxes for infection because employees work in close proximity and often need to shout, spraying droplets that can be laced with the virus. Cargill, Tyson and other major industry players closed about two dozen poultry-, pork- and beef-processing centers over the following weeks as workers fell ill. In April and May, more than 17,000 industry workers tested positive for COVID-19 and 91 died, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The impact rippled to grocers, who struggled to stock certain items, and to restaurants like Wendy's, which temporarily changed its menu at some locations to compensate for beef shortages. At the same time, farmers were forced to kill animals that couldn't be slaughtered. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that beef and pork production in April was down 20% and 10%, respectively, compared with a year earlier.

Processing plants emit carbon dioxide, and when their operations slow down, so do emissions. But the real climate benefit from slowing the agriculture industry is reducing the methane from livestock and nitrous oxide from treating fields with fertilizers. When you add it all up, about 10% of all U.S. greenhouse-gas emissions come from the agriculture industry.

Americans too often don't think about where the milk or ground beef in their shopping carts originated, let alone the carbon footprint of those products. That's because the U.S. food system is so robust that shortages or price spikes—two conditions that might trigger consumers to take a closer look at the supply chain—are rare. The pandemic might be an exception, but even that, experts say, isn't likely to have a lasting impact. "COVID-19 has slowed us down a little bit and forces us to think about some of these things," says Teng Lim, an associate professor at the University of Missouri's commercial-agriculture program. "But when we get back to what we do normally, we forget how things were before."

Meat processing has already started to recover since April, and consumers are ready to buy. In June, the USDA forecast that not only will red meat and poultry production bounce back from the coronavirus dip, it'll keep growing and hit a record 107 billion lb. in 2021.

IT'S NOT UNUSUAL for farmers to get 10¢ on a chicken that sells for $6 at the supermarket, or around $10 for a whole pig that takes six months to raise. Given such slim margins, it's easy to see why the industry is fixated on efficiency and economies of scale. There are fewer meat packers now compared with decades ago, and the plants operating today are much larger. Farms have dramatically consolidated, as well. A 2017 USDA census found that just 4% of all farms control 58% of farmland.

To boost margins, farms and processors have streamlined and specialized operations in every way possible in recent decades. They use techniques that yield more for each animal, ranging from vaccinating the animals and improving their feed, to more controversial practices like breeding animals to be larger, packing them into confined spaces and slaughtering them inhumanely. For example, in 1950 there were 25 million dairy cows in the U.S. Today there are 9 million but they produce 60% more milk. Such efficiency improves the farmer's bottom line and lowers the emissions per glass of milk. However, farm emissions overall continue to rise, in part because today's larger animals eat more. In the case of cattle and dairy cows, that means more belching and more cow pies, two major sources of methane gas.

NOT ONLY WILL RED MEAT AND POULTRY PRODUCTION BOUNCE BACK, IT'LL HIT A RECORD IN 2021

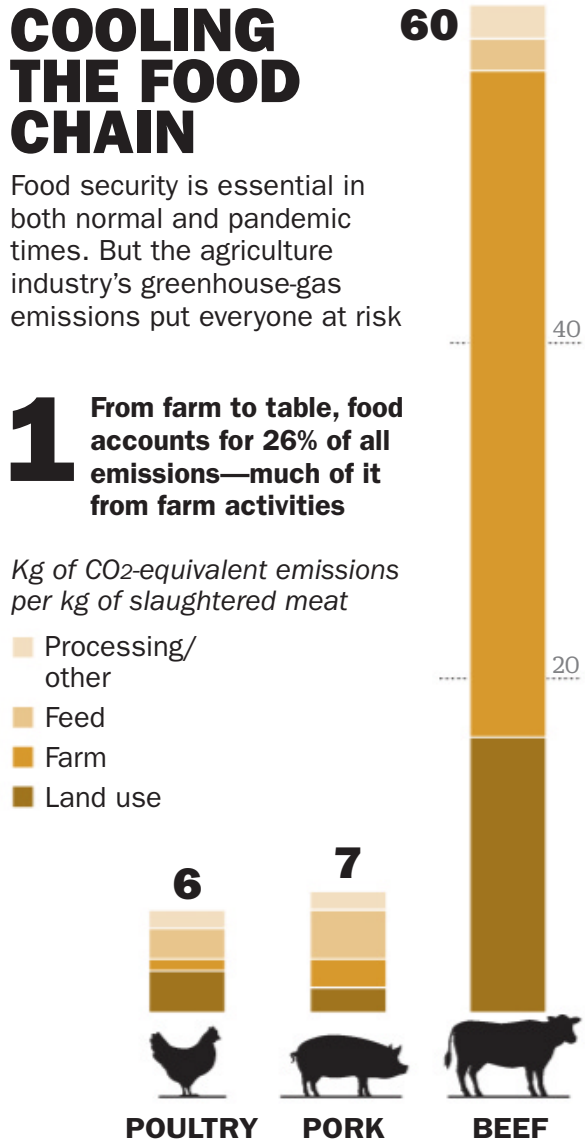
"We have optimized our efficiencies," says Frank Mitloehner, a professor in the animal-science department at the University of California, Davis. "That has benefits, but it's also a problem. We have very few processing plants, and if one or two have a problem, it runs through the whole supply chain. It's very painful to watch."

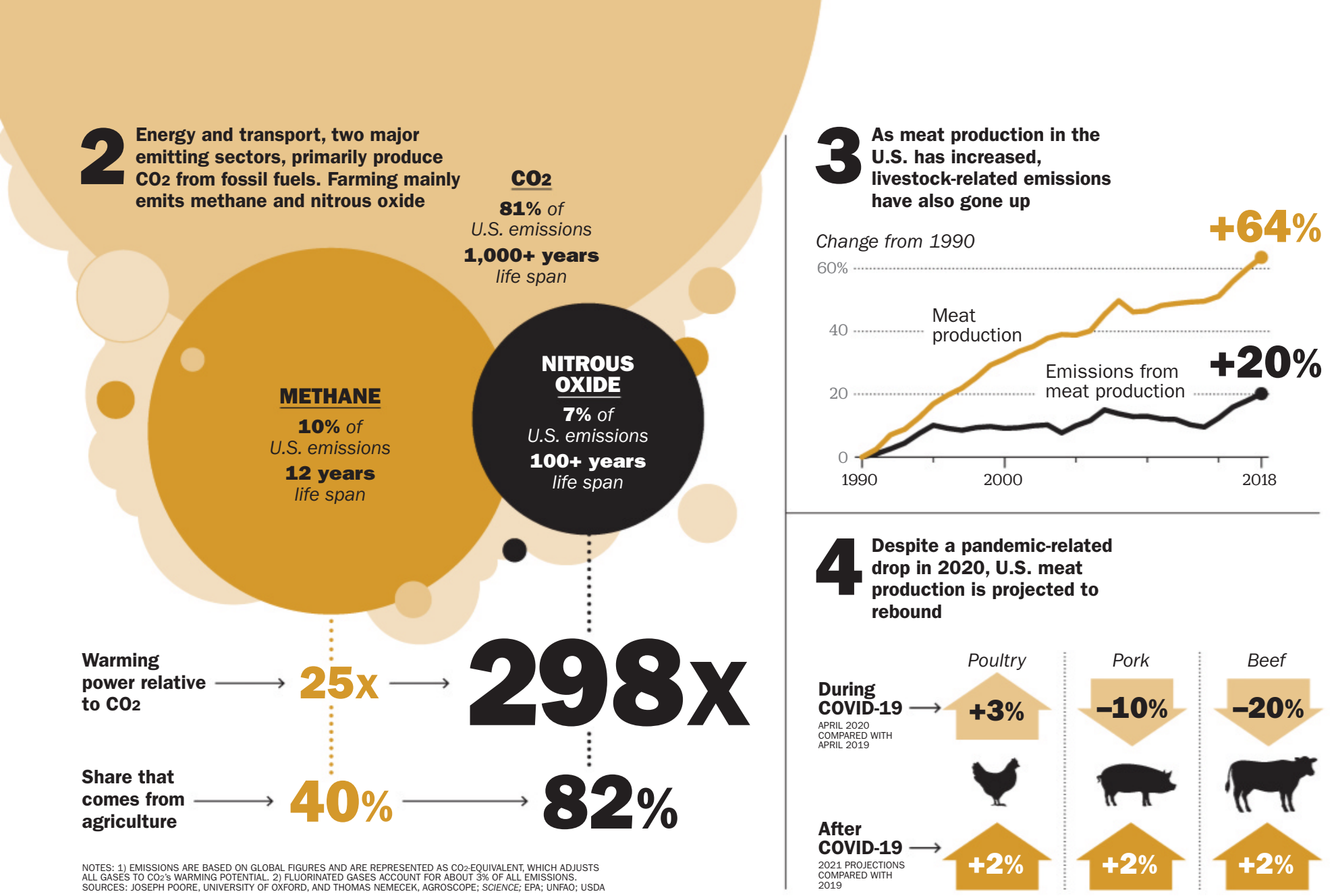
With foundations like these, the system was bound to wobble when the pandemic hit. So far, it has mostly held up to the pandemic, but as the number of COVID-19 cases continues to rise in the U.S., there's no certainty that it will do so forever. Arguably, what makes the agriculture industry vulnerable in a pandemic is also what puts it in a good position to tackle emissions. Larger farms are more suited to comply with government regulations—and the more land and livestock under their control, the greater the impact their actions have.

COOLING THE FOOD CHAIN

Food security is essential in both normal and pandemic times. But the agriculture industry's greenhouse-gas emissions put everyone at risk

1 **From farm to table, food accounts for 26% of all emissions—much of it from farm activities**





But so far, there hasn't been nearly enough progress.

Methane is distinctly different from other greenhouse gases. It's about 25 times better at trapping and emitting heat than CO_2. But animal-produced methane is part of a natural cycle, unlike CO_2 from fossil fuels, which rides a one-way street from beneath the earth's surface to the atmosphere. After it's belched out of the cow, methane breaks down after about 10 years; CO_2, on the other hand, sticks around for centuries.

Even so, reducing methane emissions is important to the globally agreed-to goals to keep planetary warming well below 2°C above preindustrial levels. The best way to eliminate agricultural methane emissions would be to stop farming cows. But dietary patterns change slowly, and in the interim, the U.S. farming industry is working on ways to limit methane emissions while still providing the public the meat products it expects. The industry is poised to apply science that can both improve the health of livestock and reduce their emissions, says Sara Place, chief sustainability officer at animal-health giant Elanco. For example, U.S. farms are increasingly adopting technologies that capture methane that comes off of ponds of cow poop. The method—already widely used in Canada and Europe—involves capping the ponds with a liner to trap the gas, which then gets piped to a facility called a digester system several miles away, where it is converted into biogas that can be used as fuel to run delivery trucks.

To combat emissions from the other end of the cow, feed additives like seaweed that inhibit the methane-producing enzymes in the cow's digestive system may do the trick. Other additives have been shown in trials to change the fermentation process in the cow's digestive tract so that the cow burps up hydrogen, a harmless gas, instead of methane. There's also ongoing research in genetics. If cows can be bred to produce more meat or milk, it might also be possible to breed them to emit less methane. Some industry researchers and consultants, like Place and Mitloehner, are excited about these technologies. But there are plenty of critics.

"Rather than continually engineer our way out of problems with animals, there's a simpler solution: eat more plants," says Josh Balk, vice president of farm animal protection at the Humane Society of the U.S. Balk doesn't think the country can rely on consumers to make such a massive dietary shift. Instead, he says, the food industry can help elevate plant-based foods, by selling them alongside animal products in grocery stores, and offering them as menu items, as White Castle, Burger King and other restaurant chains have started to do with plant-based meat alternatives.

Overall, the agriculture industry has a major stake in lowering emissions. If emissions continue to rise, plants bred and crossbred over decades to optimize the food system may not withstand rising global temperatures. Industry changes that address both emissions and the welfare of animals may also reduce the risk of the next pandemic. COVID-19 didn't start at farms, but animals packed into confined spaces can easily spread infection. Poultry, for example, has been known to make people sick with avian flu.

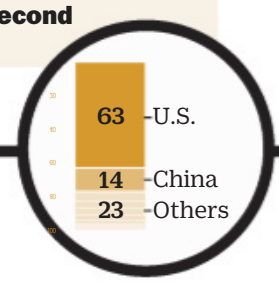
There's no one point in the food system solely responsible for making the necessary changes. At the end of the day, we all have to eat, and consumers, processors, distributors and producers alike have a role in ensuring that food is available to all—and produced in a way that is sustainable for the planet and humanity. ☐

THE PARIS PLAN

Lockdowns offered cities a glimpse of a greener future. Mayor Anne Hidalgo wants to turn it into reality

BY VIVIENNE WALT/PARIS

The U.S. has 63 of the WORLD'S TOP 100 PER CAPITA CO_2-EMITTING CITIES, more than four times as many as China, which comes in second



THE CYCLISTS PEDALING UP TO A COBbled square on Paris' Left Bank looked like any group of friends enjoying a Sunday afternoon ride in late June. But this was no casual outing. To them, it was a revolution in the making. From one bike hopped a slight dark-haired woman in a Chicago Cubs windbreaker: Anne Hidalgo, the mayor of Paris. Unclipping her bike helmet, she told journalists gathered there that the French capital needed to drastically cut car use—the key message on the campaign trail for her re-election on June 28. "We are getting there," she said, "but we have long way to go."

Hidalgo is hardly alone among city leaders in trying to transform urban life. Across the U.S. and Europe and even in the megalopolis of Istanbul, mayors have pledged to create millions of acres of new parkland, finance companies' switches to solar-powered electricity, retrofit buildings and ban private cars from inner-city districts, all in an effort to cut carbon footprints and rein in pollution.

Their efforts could not be more urgent. It was national leaders who signed the Paris Agreement, a 2015 global climate pact on carbon emissions. But it is the cities, where most of the world's population lives, that must figure out how to meet those targets. While cities occupy just 2% of the earth's surface, they consume 78% of the world's energy and produce more than 60% of its entire carbon emissions, according to U.N. statistics. "Cities are a relic of the industrial age," says Richard Florida, an urban specialist at the University of Toronto. "They have to be redesigned to be healthier and safer."

The eerie silence that fell over the world's cities during months of lockdown helped reinforce that message, says Hidalgo, sitting in her vast wood-paneled office in Paris' city hall two days after clinching a second six-year term. "We could breathe. We heard birds," she says. "It was not real life. People were afraid," she adds, in a nod to the nearly 30,000 French killed by the coronavirus. "But nonetheless, we thought, 'If it could be like this, how pleasant it would be.'"

The years since Hidalgo came to office in 2014 have been anything but pleasant

During lockdown, Paris quietly converted 31 miles of streets into bike lanes, or corona pistes

PHOTOGRAPH BY SAMUEL BOIVIN

for Paris, from the devastating terrorist attacks of 2015 to the calamitous fire in Notre Dame cathedral last year. Yet even as tragedies struck, she kept rolling out plans to transform her city into a greener and more people-friendly place. Her ambitions have won her plaudits from the green lobby but also the ire of drivers and other Parisians.

Hidalgo's most controversial act has been to create about 870 miles of bike lanes that now crisscross Paris, a plan she intends to vastly expand. In the process, Hidalgo has eliminated thousands of parking spaces and shut several key roads entirely to car traffic. That includes the road on the northern bank of the Seine River, which for years allowed drivers to zip across the city in minutes; now it is reserved for pedestrians. From 2024, diesel cars will be banned from Paris. Meanwhile, engineers have mapped the city's buildings according to their energy efficiency, the mayor says, and so far have retrofitted about 50,000 of them with better insulation and ventilation. Hidalgo has also loosened rigid building codes, allowing residents, for example, to plant trees in their neighborhoods—an act that previously required overcoming steep bureaucratic hurdles.

Globally, Hidalgo has also been one of the most visible city executives on climate change since her city hosted the COP 21 summit, when the Paris Agreement was signed, in 2015. Until late last year, she was the rotating chair of C40, an organization of large cities founded in 2005 to coordinate local climate policies. The group has emerged as a crucial network for city leaders trying to roll out environmental initiatives, especially in countries—like the U.S.—where federal officials offer little help. "We are pretty much on our own," Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney told TIME at a C40 meeting in Copenhagen last October, referring to American mayors. "We can have a big impact, but we cannot do it all." The sense of sharing a green foxhole has forged a bond among mayors that has held through the pandemic. One of the first calls Hidalgo received after her re-election victory was from Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, who succeeded her as head of C40.

The group convened online in May to discuss how to reshape their cities in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic,

Hidalgo says she wants Paris to rank alongside Amsterdam and Copenhagen as havens for cyclists

and many mayors are already beginning to take action. Giuseppe Sala, mayor of Milan, has proposed 22 miles of new bike lanes, telling a reporter, "People are ready to change attitude." London Mayor Sadiq Khan increased the tolls for driving into the inner city.

Hidalgo has also seized the moment. As millions of Parisians languished indoors, the city quietly turned another 31 miles of road into bike lanes and named them *corona pistes,* or "corona lanes." By the time the city reopened, in mid-May, residents found that cars were no longer allowed on the main east-west artery, Rue de Rivoli. Now you can cycle or scoot through the commercial heart of Paris, from the Louvre Museum to the Bastille Square, in minutes. Handily for the bike-loving mayor, the bike lane cuts straight past city hall. "I often go by bike from my home to city hall, and there are no cars, just bikes and pedestrians," Hidalgo says. "All of a sudden there is this silent space."

Now that she has won re-election, she is thinking of new ways to transform the urban environment. One key concept is the "15-minute city," crafted by one of Hidalgo's consultants, Carlos Moreno, a professor of innovation at the Sorbonne University in Paris. The idea is to develop infrastructure enabling residents to access services like public transportation, stores and schools, all within a quarter-hour walk from home. "We've seen through the COVID pandemic that it's possible to work differently, to create new hubs," Moreno says. "I am optimistic."

NOT ALL PARISIANS feel so upbeat about the changes. The morning after I met Hidalgo in her office, thousands of drivers working for Uber and other private taxi companies converged on Paris' Boulevard Raspail, a major road cutting through the Left Bank, in an enraged demonstration against the mayor's anti-car program. For hours, they parked their cars across two lanes along several miles of the four-lane boulevard, honking their horns. "We have 2,500 drivers demonstrating, all because of Mme. Hidalgo," fumed Anthony, 53, at the postelection protest against Hidalgo;

PREVIOUS PAGE: NURPHOTO/GETTY IMAGES; THESE PAGES: YOAN VALAT—EPA-EFE/SHUTTERSTOCK; ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX FINE FOR TIME

he runs his own private taxi service and declined to give his last name. "This is not a matter of being for the environment or against the environment. Look, we are driving electric cars!" he said, pointing at some of the vehicles.

And yet increasingly, voters are on the side of the environmentalists. The June 28 elections saw France's green party, called EELV, win mayorships in major cities like Lyon, Bordeaux and Strasbourg. Hidalgo also owed her victory in some measure to an election alliance with the greens. Green parties also won nearly 10% of the seats in the European Parliament last year, as well as about 20% of votes in Germany's local elections, with many voters saying that climate change was now their biggest worry. Hidalgo says she is not surprised. "I have seen this coming for a long time," she says. "The preoccupation around the environment among residents is very, very strong in all the big cities of the world. It is really the No. 1 subject."

Beyond the current crisis, Hidalgo has her eyes set on July 2024, when the Olympic Games are scheduled to kick off in Paris. Hidalgo says she envisions a city finally transformed through the Olympics. A string of riverside public pools, purpose-built for the Summer Games, will become permanent fixtures, with the Seine cleaned and swimmable. The immigrant-heavy town of Seine-Saint-Denis, northeast of Paris—one of the poorest areas in France—will see a building boom, with an eco-friendly Olympic Village and Media City and the Olympic aquatic center all located there. Electrified rapid transit will be expanded across the capital. And despite the steep Olympic budget for the city of about $8 billion, Hidalgo is determined to adhere to environmental principles; she nixed a €100 million ($112 million) sponsorship deal with the French oil giant Total and has banned the fossil-fuel industry from being involved. "The Games will be a very, very important motor to transform the city," she says.

If her prediction proves correct, Parisians will soon be living in a much leafier city, and with far more quiet—even with the honking from drivers protesting Hidalgo's ideas. *With reporting by* CIARA NUGENT/COPENHAGEN *and* MÉLISSA GODIN/LONDON ◻

VIEWPOINT

We must act as one to preserve our world

By the Dalai Lama

This planet is our only home. Environmental experts say that over the next few decades, global warming will reach such a level that many water resources will go dry. So ecology and combatting global warming are very important.

For example, my country, Tibet, is the ultimate source of water in Asia. Rivers including Pakistan's Indus, India's Ganges and Brahmaputra, China's Yellow River, as well as the Mekong, flow from Tibet's plateau. So we should pay more attention to the preservation of Tibetan ecology. This is not only for the interest of 6 million Tibetans but all people in this region. In the past, when I was flying over Afghanistan, there were clear signs that what used to be lakes and streams were already dry. I feel that Tibet also may become like that soon. Regarding Tibet's political matters, I have already retired. But regarding Tibet's ecology and very rich culture, I'm fully committed.

We human beings have these marvelous, brilliant minds. But we are also the biggest troublemakers on the planet. Now we should utilize our brains with compassion, and a sense of concern. This is why one of my commitments is promotion of deeper human values.

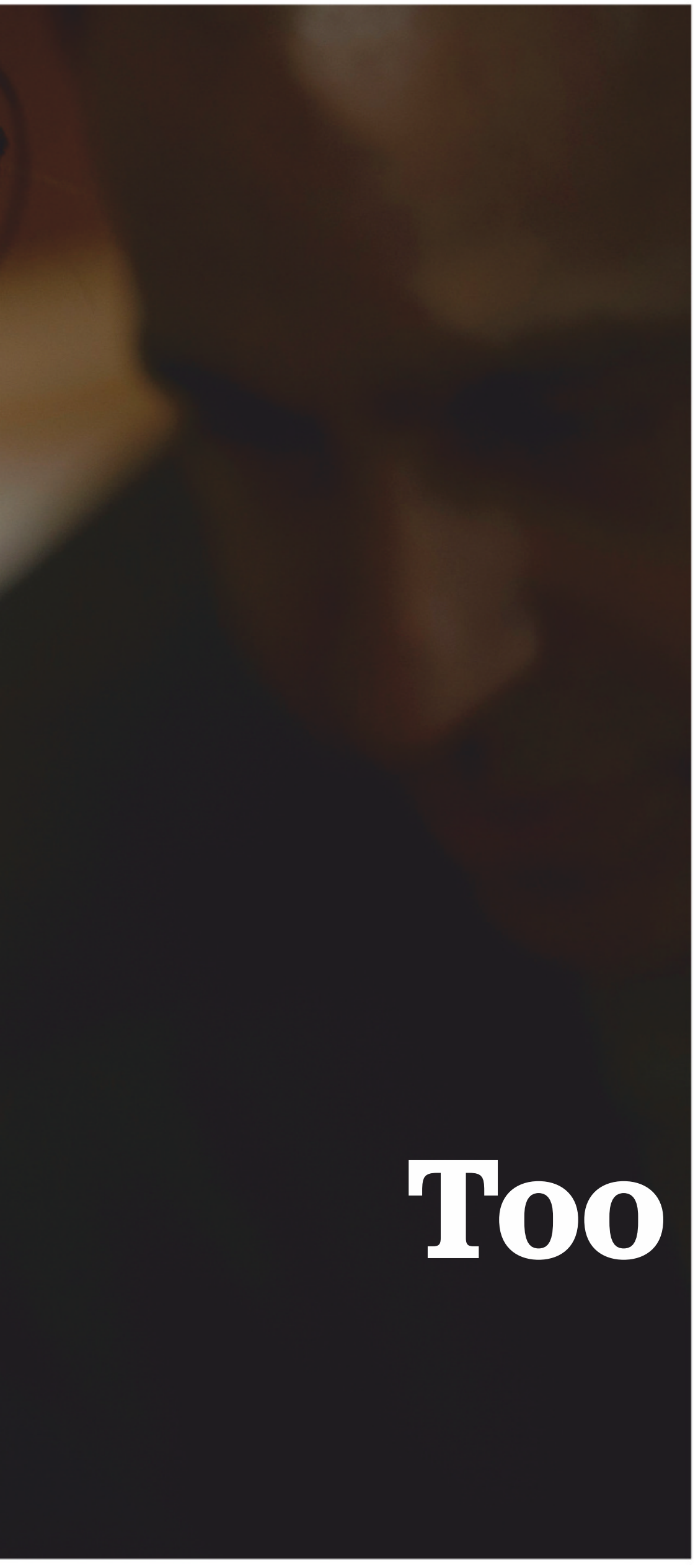
From birth, we rely on others, particularly our mothers. From then, each individual's existence entirely depends on a community, because we are a social animal. Community is the source of our happiness, so we must take care of the community. So now, in modern times, the concept of humanity is one community. East, west, north, south: everyone is interdependent. The modern economy has no national boundaries. Therefore, now we need a sense of oneness of all 7 billion human beings. In the past, many problems were created because of too much emphasis on our differences, such as nationalities and religions. Now, in modern times, that thinking is out of date. We should think about humanity, about the whole world.

We must listen to scientists and specialists. Their voices and knowledge are very important. And religious people should pay more attention to scientists rather than just pray, pray, pray. In the ancient Nalanda Buddhist tradition, which we Tibetans follow, everything is investigated and not accepted by faith alone. If through reasoning we find some contradiction, even in Buddha's own words, then we have the right to reject them. From childhood, I was always engaged in a lot of debate. Our thinking was based not in faith but reasoning.

Buddha himself was not born in a palace but under a tree. He attained enlightenment under a Bodhi tree. When he passed, it was under a tree. One of the rules during our monsoon retreat is that we should not cut down anything green. So this shows that Buddha himself paid attention to green issues.

Hours, minutes and seconds: time never stands still. We also are part of that nature. The past is important, but already past. The future is still in our hands, so we must think about ecology at the global level.

The Dalai Lama is the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists and a Nobel laureate. This essay is adapted from his recent TIME 100 Talk



Demings, at a House Intelligence Committee hearing on impeachment in November, is in the running to join the Democratic ticket

Too Blue?

VAL DEMINGS' PAST AS ORLANDO'S TOP COP COULD BE AN ASSET IN THE DEMOCRATIC VEEP STAKES—OR A LIABILITY

BY LISSANDRA VILLA

ON THE CUSP OF DONALD TRUMP'S SENATE IMpeachment trial in January, Val Demings went to dinner at a Washington seafood joint, the Salt Line, with her colleague Hakeem Jeffries. The two Representatives had recently been chosen, with five other House Democrats, to present the case to remove the President from office—the first two Black presidential impeachment managers in American history. As they discussed the weight of the role, Jeffries, the chair of the House Democratic Caucus, made a prediction. "When this is all said and done," he told Demings, "you're going to be on the short list for Vice President."

"Get out of here," Demings said.

"I just have that feeling, Val," Jeffries insisted. "The world is getting ready to see what we here in Congress already know about who you are."

Jeffries was right. This summer, Demings, 63, has shot up the list of candidates to be Joe Biden's running mate. Her rise began with the impeachment trial, where she turned complicated arguments about Trump's conduct into straightforward language. It has accelerated in recent weeks amid the nationwide racial-justice protests following George Floyd's death in Minneapolis. As Biden faces pressure to add a woman of color to the ticket, and to repel Trump's claims that he's soft on crime, Demings may be a match for the moment: a Black woman from the battleground of Florida who capped a 27-year career in law enforcement by becoming Orlando's first woman police chief in 2007. In one *USA Today*/Suffolk poll conducted at the end of June, 72% of Democrats said

PHOTOGRAPH BY GABRIELLA DEMCZUK FOR TIME

it was important to them that Biden choose a woman of color.

Biden has confirmed that Demings is among nearly a dozen women on his list. But her candidacy faces challenges as well. Biden, 77, has said he's looking for a running mate who is "ready to be President on Day One." Demings is only in her second term representing Florida's 10th District, a short political résumé for national office. And to some of the Black voters whom Biden is counting on in November, her career in law enforcement is not an asset. Demings was "a leader within an institution that is inherently violent, racist, patriarchal and protective of capitalism," says Charlene Carruthers, an organizer in Illinois with the Movement for Black Lives. "It's not simply enough to have someone who looks like me as the vice-presidential nominee. I'm interested in someone who shares my values and is aligned with our vision."

Demings rejects the proposition that her record in law enforcement might be a liability in this political climate. "I have no regrets about the career paths that I've taken," she says from her Washington apartment in a June 25 interview with TIME. But her chances to become Vice President rest in part on whether Demings—and Democrats—can reconcile her identity as a former cop with that of a Black woman in a country where Black people have the most to fear from police. Some on the left see her as a symptom of the problem, not a beacon of progress. This raises some hard questions for Americans. How much should we expect our politicians to account for injustices that are bigger than any one person? Is it fair to ask public servants how their own experiences with racism or sexism guide their approach to fighting such forces stacked against them? And are those who have found success within existing structures an extension of systemic failure or the ones best equipped to fix them?

Demings at the scene of a mass shooting in Orlando's Gateway Center in 2009

JOE BURBANK—ORLANDO SENTINEL

WHEN VALDEZ VENITA DEMINGS WAS TAPPED as Orlando's police chief in 2007, the announcement reached officers in the department by pager. She was the first woman to hold the role, and kudos poured in—flowers, phone calls, emails. But it didn't take long for Demings to notice something odd: *Congratulations,* well-wishers would say. *You know that's a big job.*

It was. But no bigger than it had been under the seven male chiefs Demings served under before taking the position. None had been challenged on whether they could do it. The implicit sexism wasn't a surprise: as she climbed the ladder in the department, she recalls being quizzed on policy by subordinates to see if she knew what she was doing. "When you are a woman and a Black woman," Demings says, "when you walk into the room, unfortunately, men and women sometimes determine what they think you are capable of."

Demings was born in Jacksonville, Fla., one of seven children crammed into a two-room house. By age 4, she'd been called racial slurs. Her mother was a maid; her father worked as a janitor, and mowed lawns and picked oranges on the side. Sometimes he had to ask his employers for advance pay to foot the bill for his children's class trips. Demings took her first job as a dishwasher at 14, and later became the first in her family to graduate from college.

Her first career was as a social worker, working with foster children. In 1983, she left Jacksonville for Orlando, where she joined the police force as a way to save money for law school. But she stayed, drawn to a job where she believed she could help people who needed it. "Every job that she did, every position that she held, she did it with finesse, she did it completely," says Renita Osselyn, a retired Orlando Police Department (OPD) school resource officer and close friend of Demings'. In 1984, when Demings was a first-year officer and he was a detective, she met her husband, Jerry Demings, who is now the mayor of Orange County, Florida, which contains Orlando.

When Demings became chief, Orlando's crime rate was at an all-time high, the Great Recession was just around the corner, and the Black Lives Matter movement was still several years away. She set to applying her social-work background to her new role, creating a community initiative, Operation Positive Direction, that paired at-risk youth with mentors. The department also partnered with GED programs, sending officers to homes to check on those who had missed class. Demings says she imposed an early-warning system in 2008 that triggered reviews of officers who showed patterns like those of force, absence and citizen complaints. She says that she saw arrests as short-term solutions and preferred instead to address the root issues that cause "decay" in communities. She boasts of reducing the crime rate in Orlando 40% during her tenure.

At work, Demings was known as a good communicator. Terrell Fawbush, a retired officer, says that when two of Fawbush's children and a niece died in a car accident in 1995, Demings, then a lieutenant, served as a department liaison to help her through the tragedy. Demings did everything from driving Fawbush to the funeral home to making sure her family had meals figured out. "She knew what was best for me to keep me going," Fawbush says.

Asked if she regrets anything about her time in law enforcement,

Demings says she wishes she could have done more. "Could I have saved one more life? Could I have saved one more officer's career? Could I have protected someone in the community more? Of course, I would never say I was perfect."

It's a careful answer, similar to a job applicant saying their greatest weakness is trying too hard or caring too much. But it's difficult to imagine she does not have specific regrets. Like the time she left her vehicle unlocked and had her department-issued firearm stolen. Or the 2010 incident in which an officer, Travis Lamont, broke the neck of an 84-year-old veteran, Daniel Daley, while performing a "dynamic takedown," according to the Orlando *Sentinel*. At the time, Demings, who left her post as chief in 2011, found the technique to be "within department guidelines" but ordered a review of the policy. Daley was awarded $880,000 by a federal jury. Demings says that as a result of the ensuing policy review, the department modified its policies "to require the engagement of second officer to more effectively manage individuals during disturbance calls."

The Daley incident was highlighted in a 2015 *Sentinel* investigation that found the OPD used force more than twice as often as other similar-size agencies. Most of the time period covered by the report was after Demings left the OPD. But critics say that as chief Demings failed to address the department's cultural problems. "Val Demings is part of the establishment here in central Florida," says Lawanna Gelzer, a community activist in Orlando. Asked whether the OPD has systematic failures when it comes to use of force, Demings demurs, saying that "every agency has a responsibility to always look within itself and try to improve."

SHORTLY AFTER RETIRING in 2011, Demings set her sights on politics. She ran for Congress in a Republican-leaning district in 2012, coming within 4 points of the GOP incumbent. In 2016, she ran again, in a redrawn district that favored Democrats, and won.

In January, Demings was the only nonlawyer among the team of impeachment managers. Trial days ran late, after which the managers received packets they needed to be ready to discuss by early morning. Demings was battling bronchitis. But she made a mark. At one meeting, recalls Ashley Etienne, an adviser to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, several of the lawmakers were discussing the day's material. Demings interrupted. "I just think it's really simple," she said. "It's right vs. wrong. And what the President did is wrong."

In early May, weeks after he'd committed to picking a woman for the role, Biden told a Florida television station that Demings was one of "close to a dozen really qualified and talented women who are on the list" of potential running mates. Perhaps the biggest question for Biden's team is whether Demings' record in law enforcement is a boon or a burden in this political environment. She has responded to the protests by saying that if she was still an officer, she would be out taking a knee with protesters, and wrote a Washington *Post* op-ed asking her "brothers and sisters in blue: What in the hell are you doing?" She has called for reviews of law-enforcement hiring policies and police training standards.

"If the argument is going to be she's not Black, she's blue, then God help us all," says John Morgan, a Florida attorney, Democratic donor and longtime Demings backer. "I don't know where it ends." But progressives point to her 2018 support for the Protect and Serve Act, which makes it a federal crime to knowingly assault law-enforcement officers, as a troubling sign. She's not the only Democrat who's come under scrutiny for her record in law enforcement. Senator Amy Klobuchar, a former Minnesota prosecutor, dropped out of the vice-presidential running after Floyd's death in response to criticism of her record. Progressives have challenged Senator Kamala Harris over her criminal-justice record.

Some 72% of Democrats say it is important that Biden choose a woman of color

Biden has cast himself as a transitional figure, someone grooming the next generation of Democratic leaders. Whomever he picks as a running mate could be a top contender for the Democratic presidential nomination as early as 2024. For Demings, that would be a meteoric rise. In our interview, I asked her whether she would be prepared to become President. "I've chosen tough jobs in my lifetime," Demings says. "Regardless of where this path takes me, just as I've been ready before, I'm sure I'll be ready again." —*With reporting by* MOLLY BALL *and* JULIA ZORTHIAN

Society

Pandemic Schemes

AS MOST RETAIL BUSINESSES STRUGGLE, MULTILEVEL MARKETING DISTRIBUTORS ARE USING THE INTERNET—AND COVID-19—TO GROW THEIR BUSINESSES **BY ABBY VESOULIS AND ELIANA DOCKTERMAN**

ILLUSTRATION BY GUY SHIELD FOR TIME

MAKE $$$$$
WORK FROM HOME!
START LIVING YOUR
BEST LIFE TODAY!

When Christine Baker, a financially strapped

stay-at-home mom to two little girls, made up her mind to lose 30 lb., she took a cue from a friend who'd gotten fit with Beachbody. The company's online workouts and diet products cost Baker about $160, but they worked.

"Literally within 30 days, I looked and felt like a different person," says Baker, of Roseville, Calif., who was so impressed with her 2015 transformation that she decided to become a Beachbody fitness coach herself. She started paying around $135 per month to set up her own online portal and to purchase Beachbody products, and she got to work looking for customers. Yet as she spent more hours trying to sell people on Beachbody and fewer hours working out herself, Baker says the pounds piled back on but the money did not roll in.

"You're working your ass off. You're having to check in every day in your group, you're having to keep everybody motivated, because if they don't lose weight and see results, they're not going to keep buying from you," says Baker, 48. "It was like I was just throwing money away." By the time she gave up on Beachbody, Baker says, she'd lost several thousand dollars and countless hours that she wishes had been spent with her daughters.

Multilevel marketing companies (MLMs) like Beachbody, which rely primarily on distributors like Baker instead of salaried staff to sell goods and services, have long been eyed with suspicion by regulators, and for good reason. The Consumer Awareness Institute, whose research has been posted on the website of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), found that 99% of people who participate in them lose money. "Statistically, it is more likely you will win the lottery than you will make hundreds of thousands of dollars selling for an MLM," says Robert FitzPatrick, the co-author of *False Profits,* a book about MLMs, and the president of PyramidSchemeAlert.org.

But as the COVID-19 pandemic sends the economy into its worst tailspin since the Great Depression, some MLM distributors are wooing new investors with promises of big money and the opportunity to work from home—seemingly ideal for people who are unemployed. Facebook posts promising jobs are easy to spot, though the caveats that these opportunities do not offer guaranteed paychecks are rarely mentioned. "Worried about the Coronavirus?" reads a Facebook post by a Young Living essential-oils distributor touting its Thieves product line. "Thieves kills germs!" A similar post by a seller for Color Street, an MLM that sells nail-polish strips, urged members to "invest some of that stimulus check in yourself and start making money instantly."

Some sellers imply that their non-FDA-approved supplements and essential oils can protect people from the virus. "With the flu and coronavirus spreading throughout the U.S., things are selling out," wrote a seller for doTERRA, an essential-oils MLM. "If you are running low on these immune boosting protection items, now is a good time to replenish." TIME reviewed dozens of similar claims made on social media.

The FTC has sent letters to 16 MLMs warning them against making claims about the coronavirus-related health benefits of their products, the potential earnings for investors, or both.

But the FTC is fighting an uphill battle as the $35.2 billion industry rapidly evolves, courtesy of the Internet. Unlike MLMs of yesteryear that relied on door-to-door sales, today's MLM distributors can reach millions of potential recruits around the world on Facebook, Instagram and other social networks. Included in a distributor's marketing tool belt are private messages, which regulatory agencies like the FTC can't monitor. "[Social media] can be like a laboratory for deception," says Kati Daffan, the FTC's assistant director for marketing practices. "You've got all these members competing with each other to deceive more people. And they can do it however they want if there's no one watching from above."

And with so many people out of work, there's an eager audience. The Direct Selling Association (DSA), the trade group representing MLMs, says that 51% of the 51 companies that participated in a survey in early June said COVID-19 has had a "positive" impact on their 2020 revenue; 59% reported the same in a later survey. DSA president Joseph Mariano says some sellers have inflated the potential rewards of investing in their companies. "You inevitably have a few overzealous people saying things that perhaps they shouldn't," he says. "When you have a vulnerable population of people who have lost their jobs or are concerned about losing their jobs, the fact of the matter is … direct selling is generally a modest supplemental income opportunity. It's not something that is going to make you rich." Mariano says the DSA has worked with the Better Business Bureau to monitor claims about products' benefits and sellers' potential earnings. The DSA-funded Direct Selling Self-Regulatory Council has referred four cases to the FTC this year for investigation of possible falsehoods.

BUT RECESSIONS TEND to be good for MLMs, and this recession shows no sign of abating as new COVID-19 outbreaks slow reopenings. During the 2007–09 Great Recession, the number of MLM sellers began rising and went from 15.1 million in 2008 to 18.2 million in 2014, according to a DSA report.

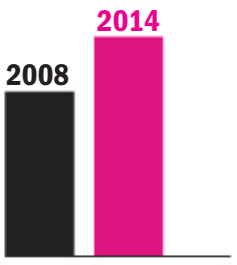
Celebrity support helped. Soccer star Cristiano Ronaldo, lifestyle guru Rachel Hollis, former Presidents George W. Bush and Bill Clinton (after they'd left office), and private citizen Donald J. Trump have, over the years, appeared at MLM events or endorsed

74% of MLM sellers are women, and 20% are Hispanic

Direct Selling Association

Attendees at Beachbody's Coach Summit in July 2019 in Indianapolis take part in a group workout

EVAN JENKINS FOR TIME



MLM participation rose during the Great Recession, going from 15.1 million in 2008 to 18.2 million in 2014

Direct Selling Association

companies. Many influencers and athletes still back them, as distributors sign on to sell everything from leggings to home cooking products.

At most MLMs, investors, who are also known as distributors or sellers, make money by selling a company's products and recruiting others to do the same. They then earn commissions or bonuses based on their recruits' sales. But after investors have recruited as many friends and relatives as they can find, communities become saturated, making it difficult for new sellers to find customers. Countless distributors end up wallowing in merchandise they can't sell and sinking into debt as they're pushed to spend more money attending training seminars and bonding conferences, critics say. "They tell you if you don't go to a training, if you miss a single training, you will never be successful," says Illyssa Demarino, 31, a Phoenix bartender who tried three MLMs and spent thousands of dollars without making any money. "It's so easy to get wrapped up in the cultlike mindset."

MLMS FASHION THEMSELVES as alternatives to the gig economy, which has been hit hard by COVID-19; apps like Uber are suffering as people avoid shared transport, while others, like Instacart and Doordash, are flooded with new workers, driving down gig pay. The MLM world implies a glamorous and safer alternative, and its prime target is women, who have been hit especially hard in this recession. Their service-sector jobs were the first to go when restaurants, bars, hotels and casinos closed, and when babysitting and housekeeping jobs ended.

Even before the pandemic, MLMs adopted the language of pop feminism with hashtags like #bossbabe and #momtrepreneur. Some sellers post doctored before-and-after photos for fitness and beauty products online in hopes of selling not just a payday but unattainable beauty.

"I was the perfect target," says Jamie Ludwig, who in 2014 was convinced by a friend that she could make good money working from home in Kansas City, Mo., while selling weight-loss shakes and other supplements for an MLM called AdvoCare. "A new mom with baby fat I wanted to lose, desperate to be at home with my kids." New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees endorsed the company, which in Ludwig's eyes gave it an air of legitimacy.

She and her husband Josh bought a $79 starter kit, and she scaled back her hours as a hairdresser to devote time to AdvoCare. All they had to do, their recruiter told them, was find enough buyers for the $900 in supplements that arrived on their doorstep each month. "I spent the entire time on the phone trying to sell, giving my kids no attention, working 50 or 60 hours a week, more than I did before," says Ludwig, 39. She and her husband, who is 41, found only a handful of buyers. They gave up AdvoCare 18 months later, but not before spending about $300 (plus transportation, food and housing) to attend a three-day "success school" sponsored by AdvoCare to learn sales techniques. When their car broke down on the trip, the couple was forced to face their financial straits. For years, Ludwig could not bring herself to look at the boxes of unsold shakes in her pantry.

AdvoCare is one of a handful of MLMs that the FTC has declared a pyramid scheme. According to the agency, 72% of AdvoCare's distributors made no money in 2016, and 18% made $250 or less that year. After its investigation, the FTC in October 2019 required AdvoCare to pay a $150 million settlement and to stop using the MLM business model. (AdvoCare said in a statement that it "strongly disagree[s] with the FTC allegations" but has changed the way it does business.) One month later, the FTC alleged that Neora, an MLM selling supplements and skin creams, was a pyramid scheme. (Neora asserted that it was "not a pyramid scheme under the law" in its own lawsuit against the FTC, where it accuses the agency of reinterpreting laws to unfairly label it.)

In the past 41 years, the FTC has filed cases against 30 MLMs alleging they were pyramid schemes, according to Truth in Advertising, an independent watchdog group. In 28 of those cases, courts either agreed with the FTC or companies paid settlements or changed their business plans to resolve the cases. But the number of MLMs makes it difficult for the FTC to make sure each one is operating lawfully, especially since the number is always in flux. The Direct Selling Association estimates that 1,100 MLMs are in operation in any given year but cannot be sure. "Many companies may even come and go before they could even be 'counted,'" the DSA says on its own website.

MLMs are not illegal, but many are at best financially risky. The chances of financial success are so grim that the DSA president, Mariano, has called participating in MLMs an "activity" rather than a job.

The numbers that MLMs report often paint a dark picture for sellers. At Young Living, 89% of U.S.-based distributors earned an average of $4 in 2018, according to an income-disclosure statement. At the skin-care MLM Rodan + Fields, 67.1% of sellers had an annual median income of $227 in 2019. More than half the distributors at Color Street fell into the company's lowest tier of earners in 2018, with average monthly profits below $12.

As the industry grows, so does awareness. Data obtained by TIME through Freedom of Information Act requests shows that consumer complaints to the FTC about MLMs have risen in recent years. From 2014 to 2018, complaints against Amway, a company co-founded by Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos' father-in-law, went from 15 to 36; in those complaints, consumers reported losing a total of more than $380,000. Complaints against

The Beachbody summit in 2019 drew thousands hoping to earn money selling the company's products and fitness routines

EVAN JENKINS FOR TIME

SeneGence, a makeup and skin-care MLM, jumped from two in 2016 to 14 the following year before falling to six in 2018; consumers reported total losses of nearly $25,000. Complaints against Monat, whose hair products stand accused of making people's hair fall out, jumped from two to 30 from 2015 to 2018, with consumers alleging losses totaling $7,572. (Monat says its products are "dermatologist-tested" and that its research indicates they are safe.)

But the resources and time required to determine if a company is operating a pyramid scheme make it impossible for the FTC to investigate every MLM with questionable practices, experts say. "It's like a policeman trying to stop cars that are speeding on a highway," says Peter Vander Nat, a retired FTC economist who spent more than two decades representing the government in cases against MLMs. "For every one that it stops for speeding, five roll on by."

States have taken up some of the burden, with Washington, California, Illinois and others representing plaintiffs in suits against various MLMs. But legal action has become increasingly challenging as more companies insert clauses in contracts that force sellers into arbitration rather than litigation in open court. Even if the MLMs are forced to settle for millions in arbitration, their wrongdoing doesn't become as public as a court settlement.

ACCORDING TO THE DSA, 74% of MLM sellers are women, and 20% of sellers are of Hispanic origin, a demographic that critics say highlights the industry's systemic targeting of economically vulnerable communities. José Vargas, a 39-year-old from Connecticut, is one Latino man who suffered. After the mid-2000s real estate crisis forced him out of his career in the mortgage industry, he was struggling to support his family as a cable technician. He was also about 25 lb. overweight.

Enter Herbalife Nutrition, which since its founding in 1980 has sold dietary supplements. Vargas started buying Herbalife's shakes in 2012 and was so happy about his weight loss that he became a full-time Herbalife distributor in hopes of making a better income and helping others get in shape. But as he shed the pounds, his wallet got lighter too. He says he paid about $2,500 for the privilege of calling himself a supervisor, which he was told would help him earn more money faster. He paid roughly $700 a month to rent space for a storefront, which was recommended as a way to build up a clientele. He says he attended mandatory local training sessions

72% of AdvoCare's distributors made no money in 2016, and 18% made $250 or less that year, according to the FTC

and "highly encouraged" national events in faraway cities. By the time Vargas gave up Herbalife in 2014, he says, he had lost close to $10,000.

Approximately 30% of Herbalife's distributors are Latino, according to the company. Herbalife in particular has faced criticism for targeting low-income Latino sellers in Mexico and California. The company has a 10-year, $44 million sponsorship of the Los Angeles Galaxy professional soccer team, which boasts a massive Latino fan base.

"You have a lot of Latinos that come here, looking to achieve the American Dream and become successful," says Vargas, who is back to working as a mortgage consultant. "I think it's a big smack in the face."

A 2016 FTC complaint accused Herbalife of deceiving consumers and portrayed issues in tune with Vargas' experiences. Among other things, it said Herbalife banned storefront operators from displaying prices for anything other than Herbalife membership fees.

99% of people who participate in multilevel marketing companies lose money

From a 2017 report by the Consumer Awareness Institute

Herbalife evaded official classification as a pyramid scheme, but only barely. Then FTC chairwoman Edith Ramirez said the company was "not determined not to have been a pyramid." Herbalife said it believed "many of the allegations made by the FTC are factually incorrect," but it agreed to pay $200 million to consumers who the FTC said had been incentivized to recruit people to buy Herbalife products—whether or not there was a market for them.

Vargas recalls getting about $600 in the settlement but says worse than his financial loss is that he persuaded others to join Herbalife. Herbalife still operates in the U.S., but its biggest regional market is overseas in the Asia-Pacific region, where FTC rules don't apply. (Herbalife says it has made significant changes since the FTC settlement to better protect distributors, such as compensating distributors based on how much they sell to customers rather than how much they personally buy, and requiring distributors to be with Herbalife for a year before opening a storefront, but some changes are not yet in effect in non-U.S. markets. In 2016, Herbalife said the settlement with the FTC showed that its "business model is sound." Company officials declined to comment on the record for this article.)

Its website also invokes COVID-19 as a reason to trust its products, which it says have earned Herbalife the designation as an "essential" business.

On April 29, Vargas' former Herbalife recruiter messaged him on social media after being out of touch for several years to ask how his family was faring through the pandemic. Vargas, suspecting the conversation would turn into a recruitment pitch, stopped responding after exchanging pleasantries. This time, he won't be swayed. "What they promise," he says of MLM distributors, "is very undeliverable."

BEACHBODY CEO CARL DAIKELER, who is 56 and estimated by *Forbes* to be worth hundreds of millions of dollars, says that achieving his level of success by selling Beachbody's shakes and recruiting others to do so isn't easy. "This is not something you jump into and instantly make a lot of money," he tells TIME. Daikeler says he sounds a warning to those who want to quit their jobs and be full-time Beachbody coaches. "I will literally say, 'Are you sure? And do you have money saved? Because this is starting your own business, and starting your own business is very hard. Most new businesses that start, fail.'"

It is months before COVID-19 had become a household term, and thousands of Beachbody distributors have gathered in Indianapolis to be inspired, to be motivated and to learn how they can turn the hours they've devoted to Beachbody into a profit—or at least earn back what they've spent on the company's products and on attending this three-day conference.

A fit man with close-cropped gray hair, Daikeler

Celebrities and athletes lend an air of legitimacy to MLMs. From left: author Rachel Hollis speaks at a LulaRoe event in October 2018; the Los Angeles Galaxy soccer team, in November 2012, wearing Herbalife jerseys; essential oils from doTERRA; quarterback Drew Brees, in a TV ad for AdvoCare's Spark energy drink

uses the gathering to announce an array of products to sell: an exercise program designed by a celebrity coach, a plant-based chocolate almond crunch bar, a pumpkin-spice protein beverage. "We have 300,000 coaches," he says to wild cheers. "And we need to find the next 300,000." The words I CAN BE MY OWN BOSS had just flashed on the screen behind the stage he's now standing on.

Rachel Hollis will take the stage at some point, but Daikeler is the person thousands of people in that audience want to be.

One of the people in the crowd is LindsayAnn Hammarlund of Atlanta, a mother of three who left her teaching job two years after joining Beachbody, when her sales surpassed her teaching salary. "We were paying so much in day care, and I cried literally every single day I took them to day care and I went to school," says Hammarlund, 35. She's recently gone back to the classroom now that her kids are older. But that MLM income, she says, has enabled her to pay down debt and take "many trips" with her Beachbody team. Dozens of other coaches who attended the Indianapolis convention told TIME they signed up because they liked the products, enjoyed the camaraderie and wanted to get in shape—not because they wanted to make money.

But on its website, Beachbody emphasizes that being a coach "means earning an income while you help yourself and others live healthier." Except that wasn't the reality for more than half of its coaches last year: 57% of them earned $0 in commission and bonuses in 2019, according to the company's income-disclosure statement. Andy Brown, 38, a former Beachbody coach, thought he'd made between $4,000 and $5,000 in 2015, until he did his taxes. "I was starting to estimate how much money I spent on everything compared to the amount of money that I actually made, and that was sort of a wash," says Brown. "And then on top of the tax hit I took, that's when I was like, I'm in the red. This isn't helping me at all. In fact, I'm probably worse off than when I started."

Christine Baker, who left Beachbody in 2017, says she was paying about $100 per month to remain an active coach, but her highest commission check was $300. (Beachbody says it is possible to remain active by purchasing or selling as little as $67 worth of product per month and paying a $15.95 monthly fee.) Like Brown, Baker says the truth hit her around tax time. She recalls her accountant telling her, "You know, the only reason why you're doing half good on your taxes this year is because you lost so much money."

The same year Baker left Beachbody, a judge in Santa Monica, Calif., ruled the company must pay $3.6 million in penalties and restitution after the city accused it of charging customers' credit cards for renewal fees without consent, and of exaggerating its products' health benefits. Now, Beachbody must clearly define renewal terms, obtain consent from customers for subscription renewals and support its health claims with "competent and reliable" scientific studies.

That hasn't deterred customers. Since COVID-19 closed gyms, Beachbody's business has been booming. Daikeler tells TIME that April, May and June were the top streaming months for Beachbody on Demand workout videos since the program launched in July 2015: the number of subscribers has blossomed more than 33% since mid-March, and customers are averaging 600,000 fitness classes on the platform per day.

And a lot of these customers are attempting to turn their newfound workout regimens into income streams. Of the approximately 405,000 Beachbody coaches who are eligible to recruit participants and make money off them, more than 141,000 signed up on or after March 1. —*With reporting by* CURRIE ENGEL/NEW YORK ◻

The majority of sellers for a skin-care MLM called Rodan + Fields made an annual median income of $227 in 2019

HOLLIS: MELISSA GOLDEN—REDUX; SOCCER: HARRY HOW—GETTY IMAGES; OILS: RODIN ECKENROTH—GETTY IMAGES

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Time Off

CENTERING BLACK STORIES
Novelist Jasmine Guillory celebrates the power of fiction to foster empathy for Black lives

JASMINE GUILLORY
ALEXA MARTIN
HOMEGOING YAA GYASI
JOHNSON You Should See Me in a Crown
JACQUELINE WOODSON RED AT THE BONE
Party of Two Jasmine Guillory
Fumbled ALEXA MARTIN

INSIDE

PEACOCK LAUNCHES WITH A BRAVE NEW WORLD

A DOCUMENTARY CELEBRATES THE ACTIVISM OF JOHN LEWIS

GROUNDHOG DAY ARRIVES IN PALM SPRINGS

PHOTOGRAPH BY NAKEYA BROWN FOR TIME

Time Off is reported by Mariah Espada, Josh Rosenberg and Julia Zorthian

ESSAY

For greater empathy, read Black fiction

By Jasmine Guillory

Guillory worked as a lawyer before publishing her first novel in 2018

ANYONE WHO KNOWS ME WILL TELL you that I love being the center of attention. But for my fifth book, *Party of Two,* I was compelled to write about a character who shies away from the spotlight. Yes, she's a Black woman like me, and yes, she's a lawyer, which I was. But just because Olivia and I are alike on the surface doesn't mean we're the same.

The five Black women at the heart of each of my books are all different from one another, and from me, which means I've had to discover their histories and quirks one by one. For Olivia, caught by her love of a man whose life as a public figure threatens to derail her own ambitions, I had to figure out what she was scared of, what brought her joy and how to balance the two. In other words, I needed my empathy.

Writing fiction helps me relate with people who have inner and outer lives different from my own. Reading fiction can do the same thing. To find that kind of empathy for Black people—for Black lives of all kinds—we need look no further than fiction.

As antiracism books fill up the best-seller lists, I'm thrilled that people want to learn more about racism, white supremacy and their own role in both. But when we say Black Lives Matter, we mean the whole of Black lives—not just when we die at the hands of the police and not just when our lives intersect with white lives to our detriment. Racism is not the only thing to know about what it means to be Black. Our joys, our sorrows, our love, our grief, our struggles to fit in, our families, our accomplishments and our triumphs—these things also matter. Black children matter, and not only the ones killed before their time. You may think you already know that, but history has proved otherwise.

Black lives are not a problem to be solved or an academic text that can be studied. To recognize Black lives as ones to celebrate, empathize with and care about, here's your antiracism work: read more fiction by and about Black people.

MULTIPLE STUDIES HAVE SHOWN that reading certain types of fiction increases a reader's empathy for others in the world. Fiction gives you a window into both lives you know and recognize and ones you don't. It helps you to put yourself in the shoes of those characters, even when you have a different perspective when it comes to race, gender or sexual identity. I've read so many books about people who are nothing like me—often by necessity, since I can think of only one book I was assigned to read in my entire K-12 education that was about a Black girl or woman—and I've learned something from many of them. As characters confront events and situations we've never experienced, fiction helps us imagine how we would deal with them.

My second book, *The Proposal,* starts with the main character, Nik, refusing a public marriage proposal at Dodger Stadium with thousands of people watching. I knew that I—as a consummate people pleaser who has to work up to correcting a mispronunciation of my own name—would have never been able to say no under that much pressure. So I had to get into Nik's head, learn what

GUILLORY: JAY L. CLENDENIN—CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES

kind of person she was and how and why she wouldn't hesitate to turn someone down on a Jumbotron. That work helped me understand people in the world who make bold, fearless decisions. It made me envy them—and sympathize with the blowback they inevitably receive.

WHEN WE READ heartbreaking reportage that includes the numbers of dead, sick, enslaved or impoverished—they can feel like just that: numbers. But fiction brings out recognition in a way that nonfiction doesn't; when it does its job, you are engrossed in the story, feeling everything the characters do. When I read *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi, which tells the stories of the descendants of two half sisters—one line raised in Africa and one in slavery in America—I viscerally understood the pain that the Fugitive Slave Act had caused. When I read Jacqueline Woodson's *Red at the Bone,* about a mother, daughter and grandmother living in present-day Brooklyn, I understood the lifelong, generational effects of the Tulsa massacre.

But fiction can also make you smile from ear to ear, and thrill in the wonder of new discovery, magic or love. When I read *One Crazy Summer* by Rita Williams-Garcia, about three little Black girls who lived with the Black Panthers, I felt how much fun they had, even amid family struggle and revolution. When I read Leah Johnson's *You Should See Me in a Crown,* I knew in my soul what it was like to be a Black teenager growing up in a small town in Indiana and falling in love for the first time.

I hope that when people read my romance novels, and those of other Black writers like Farrah Rochon and Alexa Martin and Kennedy Ryan and many more, they feel the joy of Black women who are happy and desired and accomplished and loved. White media rarely portray Black women as worthy of a happily ever after. Too often, we're rendered as objects, created to carry out another character's purpose. We can be sexual, yes—but not for a relationship, not to fall in love with. We can be maternal, yes—but for white children, not our own. We can be funny, yes—*What a great, sassy best-friend character that woman was*—but never the star.

In the pages of the romance novels I read and write, I see the Black women I've seen my whole life. They are successful, respected and involved in loving, fulfilling and happy relationships. I want the world to know not just about our pain, but the whole of our lives, and especially our joy.

Guillory is the best-selling author of five books. Her new novel is Party of Two

Fiction can also make you smile from ear to ear, and thrill in the wonder of new discovery, magic or love

READING LIST

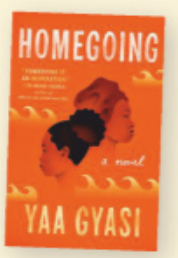
Guillory's picks for all ages

FUMBLED
ALEXA MARTIN
After a teen pregnancy splits them apart, high school sweethearts unexpectedly reunite years later

THE BOYFRIEND PROJECT
FARRAH ROCHON
Following a messy and public breakup, an app developer navigates new relationships

FROM THE DESK OF ZOE WASHINGTON
JANAE MARKS
Twelve-year-old Zoe seeks justice for the incarcerated father she's never met

HOMEGOING
YAA GYASI
This multigenerational epic traces the impact of slavery through the paths of two sisters



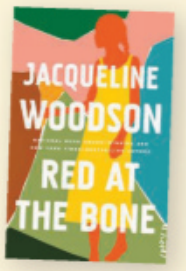
YOU SHOULD SEE ME IN A CROWN
LEAH JOHNSON
A shy high school senior runs for prom queen and falls for one of her competitors

QUEEN MOVE
KENNEDY RYAN
Reconnected in their 30s, two childhood friends embark on a steamy romance

ONE CRAZY SUMMER **RITA WILLIAMS-GARCIA**
A mother sends her three young daughters to a camp run by the Black Panthers

RED AT THE BONE
JACQUELINE WOODSON
An unplanned pregnancy ties two families together in a coming-of-age portrait of class and community

—Annabel Gutterman



Immaculate conception: the World State glitters with genetically engineered beauty

TELEVISION

In Peacock's flagship, a *Brave New* Westworld

By Judy Berman

CONSCIOUSNESS DEFINES HUMANITY. IT GIVES US EMOtions and choices, allows us to form societies, create art, understand the world around us. But it also opens the door to inequality, war, genocide, environmental destruction. It's what makes us dream of utopia and—because any perfect society would still require drudge work no self-actualized individual would be happy doing—what keeps that idyll out of reach.

The futuristic World State of Aldous Huxley's classic 1932 novel *Brave New World,* which comes to TV in a pulpy adaptation for NBCUniversal's new streaming service Peacock, believes it has solved that paradox. Each person is genetically engineered to be an ideal member of their caste: Alphas are the brilliant ruling class. Epsilons are the simple manual laborers. The rest fall in between. Each rank performs a crucial function, has its material needs met and is conditioned to enjoy its daily routine. Family and monogamy are illegal. Pregnancy is obsolete. To regulate brain chemistry there's soma, a happy pill dispensed like candy. The World State has, in effect, hacked consciousness to eliminate dissatisfaction.

Showrunner David Wiener *(Homecoming)* populates his adaptation with mostly the same characters as Huxley's novel. Entangled in a sexual relationship that has become exclusive, Beta-Plus hatchery worker Lenina Crowne (Jessica Brown Findlay) is sent to Alpha-Plus counselor Bernard Marx (Harry Lloyd) for a scolding. After he humiliates her with a holographic replay of her monogamous trysts—*Brave New World* has as much weird sex as any premium-cable romp—they form a bond based on mutual stirrings of discontent.

'It's obviously an immensely powerful instrument.'

ALDOUS HUXLEY, reflecting on television in a 1958 interview with Mike Wallace

Far from the grand rose-tinted vistas of Lenina's and Bernard's home city New London, a young man named John (Alden Ehrenreich) lives with his mother (Demi Moore, nice to see but underutilized) in a wasteland populated by so-called Savages, where religion, family and poverty persist. In the novel, this place is a reservation of sorts. Wiener combines it with a theme park for World State tourists. Inhabitants play redneck caricatures in re-enactments of, in one case, Black Friday at a big-box store. But a faction of militant Savages is rising up. This is *Brave New World* meets *Westworld*—until the action abruptly shifts back to New London.

THE SHOW LOOKS GORGEOUS—and costly. Ehrenreich's John has a brooding charm. Scripts are fast-paced and fun. Yet something is missing. TV thrives on rich, layered characters, not virtual clones. The rare burst of anger or passion does not a complete person make.

This wasn't a problem for Huxley, because his characters served as vehicles for ideas that dominated the cultural conversation in his time: the efficiency gospel of Henry Ford, Soviet communism. And from a thematic perspective, it's a sad quirk of 2020 that it's so hard to feel outraged at the prospect of a society free from violence, indigence and illness. The show barely tries, muddling its message with dazzling New London set pieces and neglecting to plumb the horrors of a culture that manufactures contentment so effectively as to provide neither inspiration nor need for art.

Huxley didn't romanticize the Savages, either. In a foreword from 1946, he expressed regret for failing to flesh out a third, superior society, where individuals would work to discern the purpose of human life. He would revisit the idea in 1962's *Island.* Considering how empty *Brave New World* feels as a serialized drama—and how desperately our culture thirsts for utopian thinking—I wish we'd gotten that show instead.

BRAVE NEW WORLD *will debut with the launch of Peacock on July 15*

O'Grady sings the blues

TELEVISION

A *Little Voice* with little to say

Like a designer T-shirt that reads "Good Vibes Only," *Little Voice* longs for authenticity but is all too saturated with the well-intentioned naiveté of privilege. Featuring original but generic coffeehouse tunes from "Brave" hitmaker Sara Bareilles (an executive producer, with J.J. Abrams and Jessie Nelson), the musical series casts fresh-faced Brittany O'Grady as Bess, a young New York City singer-songwriter who's afraid to perform her own material. As a result, she's stuck in a Disney version of the struggling-artist hustle—walking dogs, tending bar and caring for a brother on the autism spectrum (delightful newcomer Kevin Valdez) whose existence seems contrived to demonstrate her goodness.

Only in the storage unit where she keeps her piano, and where her British love interest (Sean Teale) has a makeshift office, does she dare play her songs. "I should've been born 50 years ago," she laments to him. But the problem isn't that Bess loves Bob Dylan as much as that she's an older person's fantasy of a broke, talented young woman in the contemporary city. Even Carrie Bradshaw's life was more plausible. —*J.B.*

LITTLE VOICE *premieres July 10 on Apple TV+*

BRAVE NEW WORLD: NBC; LITTLE VOICE: APPLE TV+; STATELESS: NETFLIX

TELEVISION

A crisis at an invisible border

SOME OF THE BEST TV OF OUR TIME has been set at the intersection of human folly and systemic rot, from *The Wire*'s Dickensian Baltimore to the gallows comedy of the carceral state in *Orange Is the New Black*. Using large casts and multiseason sprawl, these shows slowly widen their frames to capture more misery—and access more insight.

Though immigrant stories abound in the Trump era, American TV has yet to perform such a thorough dissection of our immigration system. The next best thing is *Stateless,* an emotional look at Australia's similar crisis from creators Cate Blanchett, Tony Ayres and Elise McCredie, inspired in part by the real scandal of Australian permanent resident Cornelia Rau's unlawful detention in the early 2000s. What's remarkable is how broad a picture the miniseries manages to create in just six episodes featuring a handful of characters.

Yvonne Strahovski *(The Handmaid's Tale)* plays the Rau-like Sofie, a misfit flight attendant who channels her loneliness into a cultish dance troupe run by a charismatic couple (Blanchett and Dominic West). But when she blows a big performance, they banish her. Later, in a twist the show takes its time explaining, Sofie shows up at an immigration detention center in the Australian desert.

It's there that the four main characters converge. Ameer (Fayssal Bazzi) is an Afghan refugee fleeing the Taliban with his wife and daughters. Another kind husband and father, Cam (Jai Courtney), takes a well-paid job as a guard at the facility over the objections of his activist sister. Finally there's Clare (Asher Keddie), a public servant freshly promoted to an impossible post controlling the center's public image.

Stateless starts slow, and its earnestness may be off-putting to some. But it has something profound to say about how injustice can snowball into catastrophe. Institutional power compounds the effects of choices made by deluded, self-interested, poorly trained individuals; even good intentions can backfire, with lethal results. How can a system entrusted with the world's most vulnerable populations possibly succeed when—for the people who live and work within it—excelling at your job or providing for your family doesn't always mean doing the right thing? —J.B.

STATELESS *comes to Netflix on July 8*

Ameer (Bazzi) and daughter Mina (Soraya Heidari) seek a better life in Australia

MOVIES

The Old Guard offers new hope for action movies

By Stephanie Zacharek

BECAUSE ACTION-FANTASIES—PARTICULARLY THOSE produced under the Marvel umbrella—have become such huge moneymakers, few filmmakers seem motivated to make better ones. These blockbusters seem designed to fill expectations rather than to surprise and delight. Their action sequences get faster and louder, but never smarter. Their pathos feels lab-created. Yet these movies make so much money that revitalizing them has come to seem hopeless.

Enter Gina Prince-Bythewood, a filmmaker who has never before made an action movie, to show the world how it's done. Though the summer is young, *The Old Guard* is almost certainly the best action entertainment of the season. Starring Charlize Theron as an immortal, ancient warrior, and KiKi Layne as a newbie-immortal just coming to terms with her own powers, *The Old Guard* is based on a comic-book series by Greg Rucka and Leandro Fernández. But don't lump it in with the big-franchise comic-book movies: in its craftsmanship and soul, it has more in common with the 1990s films of action genius John Woo than with anything that's been extruded through the franchise Play-Doh pumper in recent years. If an action movie can be elegant and thoughtful, this one is.

Theron's Andromache, Andy for short, is the leader of a small gang of ageless mercenary warriors, but her years on the job—centuries, in fact—have taken a toll. Her closest cohort is Booker (Matthias Schoenaerts); a fellow loner, he's the one who understands her best. But she also feels a deep, protective affection for the two others in their group, Nicky (Luca Marinelli) and Joe (Marwan Kenzari), who also happen to be a longtime couple. (They met during the crusades, on opposite sides of the fight, and have been inseparable ever since.) Andy's tight band specializes in heroic extractions, like rescuing groups of kidnapped girls in the desert. But when they're betrayed by a seemingly earnest ex–CIA agent (played by Chiwetel Ejiofor), her disillusionment intensifies.

Kicking the door down: Theron and friends do their part in an action movie in which craftsmanship matters

LUCKILY, A YOUNG SOLDIER who's dragged into their fold, Nile (played with understated intensity by Layne, perhaps best known for *If Beale Street Could Talk*), jolts Andy out of her ennui. Nile is a lot of work: she's reluctant to acknowledge her special powers—an immortal who's wounded can generally heal in a matter of seconds—and she views Andy as the enemy. Early on, the two go at it in a hand-to-hand combat sequence that's superlative in its choreography and visual clarity. When one throws a punch, you can easily follow the swing; a roundhouse kick reads like a brutal sonnet. Action is a language, and Prince-Bythewood—who has made three terrific films in other genres—already knows the vocabulary.

Some filmmakers work all the time, making movies even when you wish they wouldn't. Prince-Bythewood is the other kind: in the years since her marvelous debut, the 2000 *Love & Basketball,* she has made only two features, *The Secret Life of Bees* (2008) and *Beyond the Lights* (2014). Although she's been busy working in television, the movies may need her more: she brings an intimate touch even to large-scale projects like this one. Though it features all manner of gunplay—plus the use of assorted antique weaponry—*The Old Guard* never feels assaultive.

It doesn't hurt that Prince-Bythewood's cast is tops. Theron's lanky, boots-and-jeans grandeur suits the movie perfectly; she's fully in tune with its willowy grace. If you think you're not an action-movie or comic-book-movie person, this one could change your mind. *The Old Guard* feels fresh, even as it honors the best traditions of its genre. It's the action movie we didn't know we wanted. Old guard, meet vanguard.

THE OLD GUARD *streams on Netflix beginning July 10*

NETFLIX

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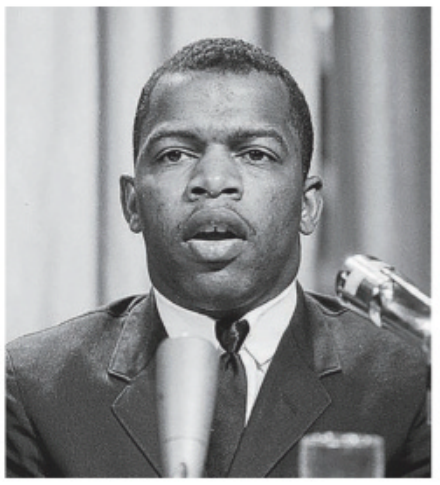

Congressman Lewis

MOVIES

Still stirring up *Good Trouble*

Democratic Congressman John Lewis is both a revered civil rights hero and a politician who knows that compromise is sometimes key to achieving difficult goals—two identities that don't always dovetail neatly. Yet, as director Dawn Porter shows in her stirring, joyous documentary *John Lewis: Good Trouble,* Lewis never loses sight of the essential struggle: "One of my greatest fears," he says in the film, "is one day we wake up and our democracy is gone."

Lewis advocates the importance of getting into "necessary trouble," of speaking up even when those in power would prefer that you keep silent. *Good Trouble*—which was executive-produced by TIME Studios, along with CNN Films and AGC Studios—traces Lewis' story from his youth in rural Alabama, to his role as a leader in dangerous civil rights protests, to his long career in the U.S. House of Representatives. Porter also gives us a sense of the man who, as a kid, longed to be a minister and practiced his preaching skills to a flock of chickens. Even then, he had what it took to hold an audience. —*S.Z.*

JOHN LEWIS: GOOD TROUBLE
is available to stream on various platforms

Milioti and Samberg: staying afloat, whatever it takes

MOVIES

Love becomes a habit in *Palm Springs*

THE BEST COMEDIES OFTEN COME with a whisper of melancholy, an acknowledgment that so much in life is a leap of faith. *Palm Springs,* directed by Max Barbakow, starts off, seemingly, as one of those unruly and unhinged escapades in which characters do anything they want just to show how groovy and iconoclastic they are: Andy Samberg, channeling the perfect mix of goofiness and gravitas, plays Nyles, the type of guy who wears a Hawaiian shirt and shorts to a formal wedding, as if the rules set by the Man don't apply to him. He embarrasses his girlfriend, bridesmaid Misty (Meredith Hagner). And he flirts shamelessly with the maid of honor, Sarah (Cristin Milioti, in a performance that's at once serrated and tender), a dark-eyed beauty who's clearly perched on the edge—she keeps refilling her wineglass, even if drinking only escalates her jittery unhappiness.

> **'To me, it's like the perfect wedding.'**
>
> **ANDY SAMBERG**, in *Variety,* on being inspired by the marriage scene in *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones*

When Nyles tries to get Sarah to talk to him, she pushes him away with the tiny-pitchfork animosity of a cartoon devil. But he wears her down, and the two sneak off; everything seems to be going great. But Nyles is stuck in an infinite time loop, which means he'll repeat the same day over and over. In some ways, it's fun—he can rework that one day however he wants. But there's also despair in knowing that he can never move forward, and that becomes Sarah's burden too, when she becomes stuck in the time loop with him.

The rest of *Palm Springs* shows how Sarah and Nyles try to break out of that loop and find their way to each other. If you detect a metaphor—you're right. Yet the movie is so light on its feet that it never feels forced or didactic, even when it asks us to confront piercing truths about love and the elusive meaning of happiness. "What if we get sick of each other?" Sarah asks Nyles plaintively, in the face of a leap she's not prepared to make. "We're already sick of each other," he says, in the voice of a man who's already a goner. "It's the best." That's the story of, and the messy glory of, love.

—STEPHANIE ZACHAREK

PALM SPRINGS *streams on Hulu beginning July 10*

GOOD TROUBLE: MAGNOLIA PICTURES; PALM SPRINGS: HULU

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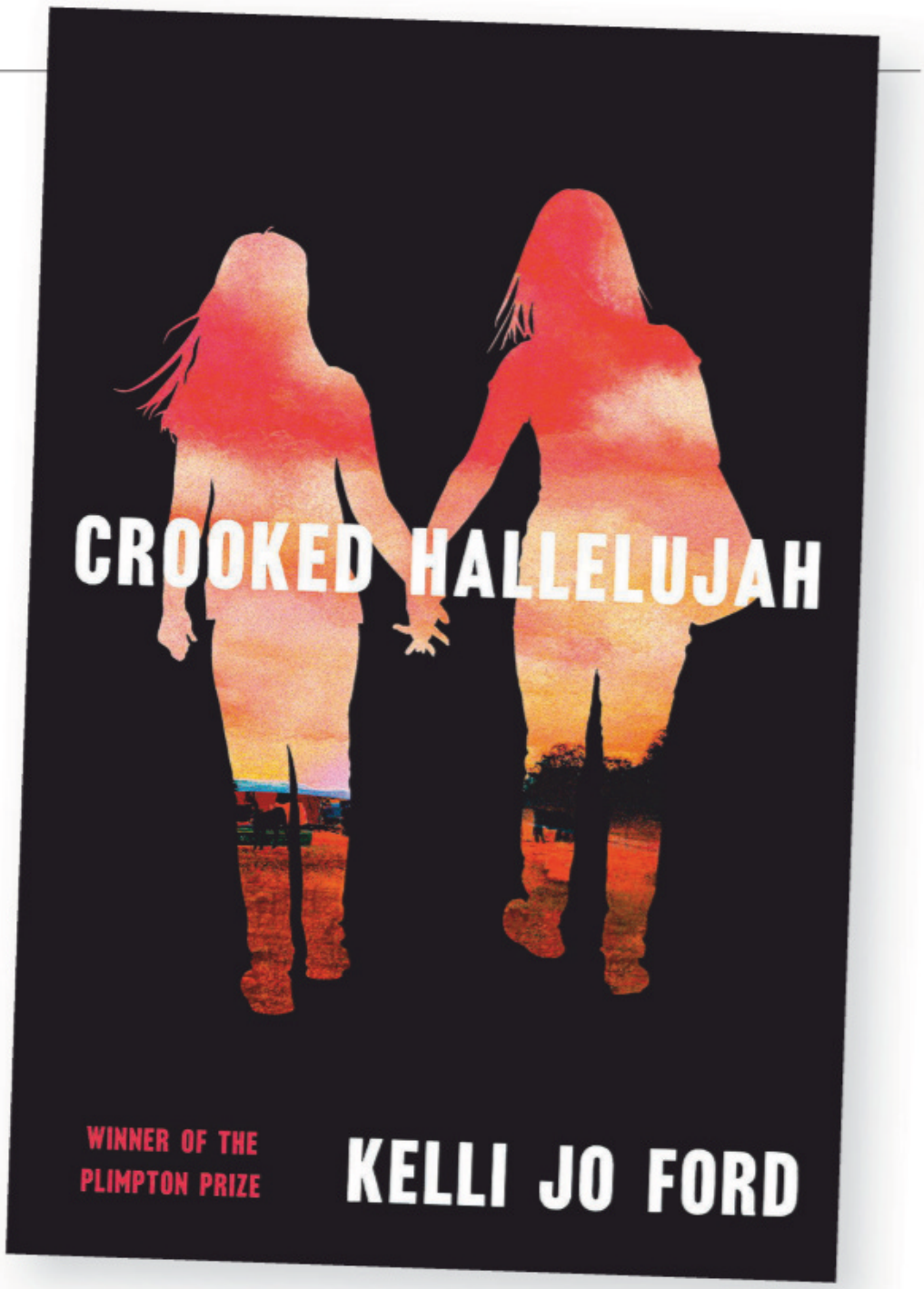
BOOKS

The end of the world, again

By Alicia Elliott



Ford, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, makes her debut with a genre-bending novel

"I PAD AROUND MY HOUSE IN THE MORNING, turning on faucets and lights to assure myself that the apocalypse is still self-contained over a thousand miles away at my mother's doorstep." This line in Kelli Jo Ford's innovative debut novel *Crooked Hallelujah* comes in the book's final section, unassumingly titled "Near Future." Up to this point, the book is a powerful, carefully observed family drama following the lives of four Cherokee women after members of their own family force them from the Holiness Church around which they've been taught to structure their lives and self-worth.

Then comes that casual mention of the apocalypse.

At any other time in recent history, a late turn in genre from literary to apocalyptic fiction might seem preposterous. But now, in a moment when we're reckoning with not only a global pandemic but also centuries of anti-Black racism and pain brought to the surface, it feels true. The end of the world we're all currently experiencing doesn't look the way it has in so many books, movies and TV shows. There are no zombies or aliens; no all-knowing, wisecracking white men who step up and save the day. There is only us: terrified, traumatized and galvanized, yet still having to endure the mundanity of daily life as though everything is fine. There is only us: trying to push aside the pain and fear of our pasts long enough to focus on the pain and fear that is our present.

Ford, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, offers a novel in short stories, allowing her to move with ease through perspectives, history and time. Each heartbreaking chapter slowly adds to the reader's understanding of these women and their increasingly difficult lives.

It's the content of those lives that sets Ford's novel apart. Granny, Lula, Justine and Reney are fictional Cherokee women, yes—but, like real Indigenous women, they have been deeply affected by colonization and assimilation. Readers who are looking for a literary version of an Edward S. Curtis painting will be disappointed; *Crooked Hallelujah* isn't an opportunity for non-Cherokee readers to get an inside look at Cherokee culture. Which is entirely the point.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE have always been more than the stereotypes American letters have written us to be. In Ford's world, as in ours, Christianity has been forced on Indigenous communities for centuries—whether through early missionaries who believed being Indigenous was synonymous with being a devil-worshipping heretic, or through government-mandated, church-run Indian boarding schools that separated Indigenous children from their families, then stripped them of their language and culture. The Cherokee women of *Crooked Hallelujah* have had their Cherokee language and culture stripped from them too—casualties of other apocalypses their community has had to survive.

That doesn't make them any less Indigenous. Their experiences of intergenerational trauma, poverty, violence, self-loathing, religion and forced assimilation are well known to the Indigenous people for whom Ford so clearly and lovingly wrote this book. As are their experiences of self-discovery, love, joy and, ultimately, release. "Like a big old baby, I hurt for the little girl I was and wonder who she could have been without the Bible, without sickness, without so much by-God loss," Justine says at one point, speaking not only to the experiences of Indigenous people but perhaps to all of us. "But without the things that make us who we are," she continues, "we're nothing, I reckon."

Elliott is the author of the forthcoming essay collection A Mind Spread Out on the Ground

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ENDNOTE

Swift change is possible

By Oliver Jeffers

WE HAVE OFTEN BEEN PLACATED WITH THE NOtion that real change takes time. But this is only true where apathy is its main resistance. Change can come suddenly too.

Western society saw change occur at breakneck speed in the 1950s, when we went from the rationing of World War II to such disposable affluence that planned obsolescence was openly celebrated: buy it cheap, buy it new, keep up with the Joneses. It was the decade that plastic really entered the cycle of humanity. And though we now know it permeates everything on our planet as a poison, it is still being produced at alarming rates.

But the biggest change of the 1950s was that collective selfishness fell upon us. People spent money, and votes, on whatever ticked the "What's in it for me?" box. Since then, we have lived an accelerated life of excess, and now we are realizing the party is over. The hangover is setting in, and we have been handed the bill.

And yet an astounding number of people are still pretending that the way humans have behaved has nothing to do with how the climate has shifted. Why do we do or care so little? Why are we so willing to hand such a damaged planet to our children?

In his seminal 1960s book *Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth,* R. Buckminster Fuller posits that if we treated our planet as a mechanical vehicle, we would treat it much differently than we do. As car owners, we know that if the oil runs low, we change it; if the tires run flat, we inflate them; if the gas runs low, we top it off. But we have not been looking after this vehicle upon which we are all riding. Indeed, we are too distracted arguing over what to play on the radio to notice the smoke coming from the engine.

We are vaguely terrified by a dystopian future where freshwater is scarce and the earth is mostly arid. But it feels like the next generation's problem. The long-looming, slow-approaching nature of the threat makes it feel impossible to do anything about it. It reminds me of a scene in *Austin Powers* where we see a hapless guard, rooted to the spot, screaming in horror at the approach of a large steamroller that will surely flatten him, only for the camera to pan back to reveal it is hundreds of feet away, moving at a snail's pace. The steamroller will arrive. Will we be standing in the same spot?

An oil painting from Jeffers' series of works showing how we need to start truly quantifying the global environment

SOMEONE WHO CAN "turn on a dime" can navigate nimbly in tight restrictions. If that's not what's been happening since March 2020, I don't know what is. Consider how much has changed, how quickly the planet, given a brief rest, began to recover.

To become distracted now would be folly, and it will be our children who bear the brunt of the steamroller. What, then, can we, as the village it takes to raise them, do to help prepare these kids for the unfinished task at hand?

Holding up our hands and painting the extent of the problem with total transparency is a good first step. We can encourage them by example to make the sacrifices that have until now proved too difficult for ourselves—cutting ourselves off from fossil fuels, redistributing wealth, returning our waste to the earth as food rather than as poison. We should also shut up and listen to them rather than feeding them our broken stories. Most important, we should shift our thinking from "me" to "we." Whatever threats loom over us in the future, be they rising seas or global pandemics, one thing is certain: they will affect us all.

There is an old Irish saying: "There are none so blind as those who will not see." For the first time in a while, the blindfold is coming off, and we are turning on a dime.

Jeffers is an artist and the author of the upcoming children's book What We'll Build: Plans for Our Together Future

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